MEMORIES OF MAORILAND

E. I. MASSY

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MEMORIES

OF

MAORILAND

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BY

E. I. MASSEY

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TO

MY FRIEND OF MANY YEARS

LIEUT.-COLONEL GEORGE MASSY, I.M.S.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

BY

E. I. MASSY

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TO THE READER

In these pages I have endeavoured to set down my recollections of our three years' wanderings in New Zealand. I am conscious of many shortcomings, but for these I beg your kind indulgence.

I wish you to see with my eyes, and hear with my ears, the sights and sounds of that lovely and romantic country. I wish you to see the turquoise blue of the lake near Wairoa, to hear the roar of Waimungus' mighty geyser, to see the jewelled flash of the many-hued rainbow trout, and to hear the musical twitter of the tiny spirit bird. Would that I could convey to you more of the bewitching beauty and romance of Aoteorangi (the land of the long white cloud), but there are limitations.

Much of the text has already appeared in *The Empire Review*, and my best thanks are due to the Editor for allowing the articles contributed by me to that publication to appear here in book form

I should like also to thank the High Commissioner for the Dominion of New Zealand for kindly lending blocks for some of the illustrations.

The book is being sold for the benefit of the Maori Girls' School, founded in memory of the late Queen Victoria.

E. I. Massy.

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MEMORIES OF MAORILAND

CHAPTER I.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

EARLY in the autumn of 1901 some relatives who were going out to New Zealand asked me if I would join them in their trip to the Antipodes. The proposal was a very alluring one; our gloomy English winter was coming on, and I had visited the south of Europe so often; but New Zealand I had never seen—here then was an opportunity not to be lost. I should go to the land of the geysers and wingless kiwi bird, and the gigantic moa besides. I should see many other wonders of the past and present, so I gave a cordial assent; and, all being satisfactorily arranged, we embarked at Greenwich in the New Zealand Shipping Company's fine boat, the *Rimutaka*, which was going direct to Wellington *viâ* the Cape.

We landed at Teneriffe and a few hours were pleasantly spent in a short expedition inland by electric tram; to an hotel, where we had breakfast, and after this we were to see the celebrated dragon tree, said to be three thousand years old. I was told that the sap of this species produces the

rich colour known as dragon's blood. The picturesque and graceful Peak of Teneriffe looked very beautiful as we steamed out to sea; and I could not help thinking, as it faded out of sight, that we were looking at the summit of one of the lofty mountains of ancient and long-vanished Atlantis. Three weeks later we were nearing the Cape, and the excitement of the passengers was great. No newspapers or news of any kind for three whole weeks—why, anything might have happened during this long interval; and then the serious question—should we be allowed to land? We felt we could sympathise with the old lady who said she would like to be "on terra cotta again." Our ever courteous and kind captain was consulted as to the all-absorbing question. "Well, really, ladies, I cannot say positively, for we do not know what is going on at Cape Town; and I fear the regulations will be very strict, as lately there has been a great deal of smuggling, in the way of importing arms into the country. Of course, as my ship is very well-known, things may be as we wish; but as I should not like you to be disappointed, do not, I beg, set your hearts too much on landing, though, of course, I will do everything in my power to gratify your wishes." So said our kind skipper as, with a cheering smile that raised our drooping spirits, he hurried off.

With the first rays of the rising sun we found ourselves at the Cape, and there was Table Mountain without its table-cloth, I was glad to see; for, when the mountain spreads its cloth—that is, when a white cloud rests on its summit—it betokens bad weather.

So we were all up betimes, and at six A.M. were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the doctor. At last he came, and each passenger was carefully looked at; not the usual perfunctory inspection when your name is called out, and you are counted as you walk past like sheep let out of a pen. This being over, we discussed the prospects of getting ashore. Sadly we waited as hour after hour passed by. At last, when 12 o'clock came and we had relinquished all hope, the much longed-for permission was given, so we started off and spent about four hours in the town. There was really little to be seen, and we had not time to go into the country; so making a few purchases, amongst which were some strawberries (fancy outdoor strawberries in November), we returned to our boat, and at 4 o'clock steamed off for Hobart, leaving Cape Town and martial law (which was then in force) behind us.

The beauty of the sea delighted everyone; it was so gloriously blue and the ocean was teeming with life of all sorts; shoals of fish were darting about, dolphins gambolling on the surface of the water, flocks of sea-gulls in great variety hovered round the vessel, sweeping down with their graceful wings to pick the scraps that were thrown overboard, and little companies of seals—six or more in number—swam quite close to us, looking at the ship with their lovely plaintive eyes so human in expression. It was a splendid sight, and all the creatures, like ourselves, seemed to be rejoicing in the last moments of golden light before the setting of the sun, ere night would wrap her soft and dusky mantle gently round

the tired world. And so to rest. Our voyage between the Cape and Hobart was amusing, for the indefatigable sports committee left nothing to be desired in contributing to the amusement of the passengers. Our great national game, of course took the lead; for a Britisher cannot do without his cricket; and as we were fortunate in having the great "Sammy" Woods on board, the willing players had in him a splendid coach.

I recollect an amusing incident that occurred about this time. A match had been arranged between the ladies and men, the men to bat and bowl left-handed; and a large crowd had assembled to see the play. Things were going on splendidly for the ladies; and a very pretty and active girl was making a fine score of runs, when the ship's look-out man signalled a whale in the offing. Away ran the spectators; and the young lady, throwing down her bat, cried out, "Good-bye, I'm off to see the whale." The other ladies of the team also decamped, leaving the men, who looked somewhat surprised and despondent, all alone in their glory. It was so funny that I could not resist a joke at the great cricketer's expense, so I remarked: "I suppose, Mr. Woods, this is the first time in your experience that you have seen a cricket match stopped by a whale." A smile of grim amusement gleamed over his usually placid features as he replied: "Yes, indeed, it is a most unusual occurrence."

I cannot resist telling one other anecdote which raised Mr. Woods to the dignity of a Biblical character. The little son of some friends used to

accompany his father to the Somerset county cricket matches, and was well acquainted with Mr. Woods. One Sunday the child's mother was giving him a lesson on the best known characters of Old Testament history. "Now, who was David?" she asked, "you remember David, do you not?" "Yes, he killed the giant and became a king when he was grown up quite big." "That is right; now do you know Samuel?" "Yes, of course, mother dear, I know him; every one knows Sammy Woods!"

I will pass over our call at Hobart Town, merely observing that the Public Gardens were exquisitely beautiful, and full of flowers; the rose-coloured creeping geranium grew in the greatest luxuriance; indeed, later on in New Zealand, I saw the whole side of a very large house covered with it. Leaving Hobart we ran south, and the weather then began to get very cold. I was told at one time, when we were farthest south, that we were only two hundred miles from the Antarctic, and dreary enough it all looked; we passed a group of islands covered with snow (the Crozets), and were told they were frequented mostly by whalers, who called in for stores and repairs; needless to say, no one envied the poor whalers or grudged them their dreary snow-clad port of call.

And on we went, the machinery beating its rhythmic way over the grey fathomless ocean till the weather got brighter and the sun shone once more; and we were told that we should reach Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, that night; but should remain in the outer harbour, and not

disembark till the next morning. Our courteous captain suggested that if we sat up till twelve o'clock, we should see the entrance into the outer harbour, and the scenery, he said, would be rather fine; this we found to be the case, the beauty of it being much enhanced by a magnificent full moon.

The early hours of morning found us in our place alongside the wharf at Wellington, and later we set out on foot to take a look at the town. The capital is anything but beautiful, the houses are somewhat huddled together, and at a distance convey the idea of being built in tiers, rising one above the other. To my mind the only beauty of Wellington is its picturesque position, lying as it does at the head of the Sound. But if Wellington possesses no special beauty, it has the distinction of being the windiest place in all New Zealand; indeed, in this respect it emulates Trieste. Leaving the Royal Oak Hotel on one occasion I crossed the pavement to get to my cab; a sudden gust of wind nearly blew me down, and with a vicious twist, almost succeeded in wrenching my hat off my head. I remarked to the driver who was placidly holding the door open, "Is Wellington always like this?"

"Oh no, it is a fairly quiet morning, sometimes it is ever so much worse!"

Our stay in the capital was not long, for we were anxious to get to New Plymouth, so we secured passages in the Union Company's coasting steamer *Takapuna*. We had a rough passage, the vibration being very great, for the machinery was too powerful for the boat. One of the stewards remarked, "There's

nothing can stop her when once she starts, she goes straight through everything!" And so we found it to be, for we simply tore through the water; the sea breaking in sheets over the game little vessel as she bounded along like a startled deer with the hunters on her track. Nearing New Plymouth the coast outline is very picturesque, the rocks being bold and quaint in shape, and at their base the foaming breakers dash with great force. The township, which has sprung up very rapidly, consists of shops and houses built of wood; in itself not prepossessing, but the district of Taranaki, to which it belongs, is the centre in the North Island of a very considerable dairying industry, and is most beautiful.

The Reservation grounds or gardens of New Plymouth are pretty and well kept up; there is one most exquisite view. In the foreground of the landscape is a light rustic bridge over a small lake, and in this sheet of water Mount Egmont, which rises in an almost perfect cone, is reflected clearly as in a mirror. The beautiful mount with its crown of dazzling snow is 8,260 feet high, the view from the summit being very wonderful; so I was informed by persons who had ventured on the ascent. I heard a curious story about this rustic bridge. The friend who told me the story had been spending the evening with some people on the far side of the Gardens, and was on his way back to the town through the Reservation grounds.

The night was by no means dark, as there was a moon, and objects were distinctly visible even at a distance. Skirting the edge of the little lake he

strolled leisurely along; the evening was lovely, he was in no hurry, and was thoroughly enjoying the walk. Approaching the bridge he noticed a man, walking hurriedly ahead of him, step on to the woodwork. On reaching the centre, he gave a spring over the railings and threw himself into the lake, disappearing beneath the surface of the water. My friend, who was much shocked and startled, ran quickly forward, and reaching the spot from which the man had disappeared gazed down into the lake, and was amazed to see it quite unruffled; not a ripple stirred its placid and mirror-like surface. He frankly confessed he had never in his life been so utterly disconcerted; an icy shiver ran down his spine as he looked suspiciously over his shoulder, with the undoubted knowledge that he had seen a visitant from the other world, and felt it was "Gey uncanny."

His leisurely strolling had come abruptly to an end, and he now stepped out at a brisk pace homewards. He found the obliging landlord of the hotel still sitting up, and inviting him to take a glass of his own good whiskey, mentioned the extraordinary adventure, asking if anyone had had a similar experience. The landlord nodding his head replied: "Sir, you are not the first, or by any means the only person who has seen that apparition, which occurs at intervals. The spirit, for such I suppose it must be, is that of a poor fellow, an architect, I believe, whose distraught and sadly troubled brain caused him to commit suicide from that very spot on the bridge where you saw the man this evening leap over the railings and disappear."

"It is a sad story," said my friend, "let us hope that his unhappy spirit may some day find peace and be at rest."

Among the many charming spots in these beautiful grounds, you can get a glimpse of fairy-land by visiting the retreat of the glow worms, a green and shady nook full of moss and ferns, where countless numbers of these little creatures congregrate, like glittering jewels in the cool dampness of the shady recesses formed by the overhanging bank.

During my sojourn at New Plymouth I stayed at an hotel in the upper part of the town, and having only just come out from home I thought things were very primitive. On arrival I was shown into a room, I should say a cubicle, without any fireplace; it contained a small iron bed, a washstand, two chairs, a chest of drawers and a looking-glass. I was told it was one of the best single rooms in the hotel. Whilst waiting for my luggage I took a survey of the apartment, which was not difficult to do, considering its limited area. Tiring of this occupation I thought of asking for some hot water; but I looked in vain for a bell, no such a thing was to be seen; I pulled the bed out from the wall, and even gazed up at the ceiling with no better success. "Humph," I grunted to myself, "it is more primitive than I thought. I'll look in the passage."

Luck, however, was not with me; but in the distance I saw a chamber-maid hovering about, and to her I beckoned. She strolled towards me, not hurrying herself in the slightest degree, quite conveying the idea she considered to-morrow would do

just as well as to-day; and when eventually she did arrive I said, "Would you kindly bring me some hot water, and as I may not see you again, for there is no bell in my room, please give me another can at 9 o'clock this evening." The girl looked me up and down from head to foot in the most utter amazement, and for a moment did not speak; recovering herself, she smiled in an indulgent way, as if I were a lunatic whom it was safer to humour, and tossing her well-frizzled head (for she wore no cap), replied in a cheerful voice, "Right you are," and then flounced out of the room, slamming the door behind her with great energy! I had a hearty laugh over the amusing little scene, and found out when I had been longer in the country that the servant question was as great a trouble in this far-off part of the world as elsewhere. The problem of domestic service is year by year becoming more serious. I can only say that whilst in New Zealand I met many people, the owners of charming houses, who were compelled for a time to shut them up and live in hotels, literally worn out mentally and physically by that incubus of modern times, the domestic of the twentieth century.

The beautiful district of Taranaki was at one time covered with dense bush; it is now intersected by a railway and has fairly good roads. Pretty homesteads are dotted about, and the land being rich in quality the grazing is excellent; the district consequently is very prosperous, and the dairy produce unsurpassed. We visited one of the many creameries in the neighbourhood—it was situated a few miles out of New Plymouth—and sent a card into the

GROUP OF CATTLE.

[*To face p.* 10.

manager, who welcomed us most kindly and showed us over the factory. The farmers bring the milk in large metal cans such as are used in dairies at home; it is then tested, and they are paid according to quality. The milk is then put into the separator, the cream being run into large tanks, and the skim milk, which is returned to the farmers, is taken home to feed their calves and pigs. The contents of the tanks are made up into butter, everything being done by machinery, and the produce put into wooden boxes ready for transport.

The butter is delicious, and I do not remember having ever tasted any that was not perfectly good and sweet, and of excellent quality. Indeed, it seemed to me to be very superior to the Normandy, Brittany, Danish and other butters with which our home markets are so freely stocked; and I feel sure that were larger quantities imported into Great Britain that the New Zealand butter could not fail to be highly appreciated, *had it a chance of being better known.* I feel wrathful when I think of the dear simple-minded Britisher consuming margarine and other such delicacies, when he might get good wholesome colonial butter. How is it that Great Britain always gives preference to the products of the whole world, whilst she overlooks the teeming riches of her own Empire? Before dismissing my subject of dairy farming, I cannot resist repeating a story I recently heard of a man who had returned from a tour in Taranaki, and was asked by a friend what it was like. "Oh!" he replied, "it is nothing but cows." There is cow everywhere, even in the

names of the townships; what with Cowpokonui (Kaupokonui), Cowpongo, Cowpuni—I wonder why they don't change the name of the whole district to Cowland!

In turning over the leaves of the past I remember many amusing incidents, and not the least amongst these was a little journey I once took down to the New Plymouth Breakwater with some members of Pollard's Opera Company. A friend had asked me to go with her to meet a sister who was coming from Wellington. We started, and arriving at the station found it a scene of the wildest confusion; so quickly securing our tickets we beat a hasty retreat and took refuge in the train. The carriage was a large one, and after we were seated it began to fill rapidly, as one after another a merry troupe of girls crowded in, escorted by their admirers, who hung on to the doorsteps and crowded up to the windows. The farewells, which were touching, were accompanied by votive offerings of flowers and chocolates.

The much worried and careworn-looking manager, who had rushed up to see that everything was right, and the young ladies comfortably installed, was assailed by a pitiless running fire of questions. "Has my Saratoga been labelled? Where is my bonnet-box? Oh, Mr. ——, you promised to see to that dress basket." The unhappy man, who found the situation getting much too serious to cope with, smiled anxiously, as with some soothing remarks of a general nature, he raised his hat and—fled—followed by some of the men, who, faithful to the end, were going down to give their lady friends a

proper "send off." The train at last started, and our fellow-travellers began to settle down, and a very pretty crew they were; just brimful of fun. But the noise that had for a short time subsided again increased, until the carriage was a very pandemonium. A nice-looking girl sitting next to me, said in an apologetic tone, "I hope we are not worrying you with our noise, but you really must excuse us, we are trying to keep our spirits up, as our friends say we shall have a very rough passage to Wellington; so we are trying to be happy whilst we can, for we shall be so sick—so very sick."

The noise then quieted down, until I was the innocent cause of another outburst. The sun was shining in very brightly just on our heads, so as there were no curtains to the carriage, I had the happy thought of opening my parasol. In a moment I was startled by cries of "Shut it up, put it down. It will bring us bad luck." The girl next to me gave me a horrified look. "Oh, do please shut your parasol." "Certainly," I replied; "but what is the matter?" "Don't you know it is dreadfully unlucky to put up a parasol unless you are out of doors? Why, if we did such a thing in the theatre we should get into great trouble; and be dreadfully scolded." I was much amused, and laughingly said, "I had never in my life knowingly brought evil luck to anyone." Thus saying, I of course kept the offending parasol severely closed for the rest of the journey. So we reached the breakwater and found half a gale of wind blowing, and our bright little friends who had scrambled on board now stood crowded

together at the side of the boat smiling and laughing bravely as the steamer cast off from her moorings. The disconsolate admirers stood hat in hand, whilst handkerchiefs were waved and hands kissed in farewell. But in the midst of sentiment and goodwill stern reality forced itself (as it usually does), for the steamer feeling herself free, kicked up her heels, giving an awful plunge into the watery abyss, when she emerged victorious on the crest of a giant wave, our pretty friends had like a cloud of butterflies on a rainy day disappeared from the changing scene.

Leaving New Plymouth by steamer on our way to Auckland, we reached the wharf at Onehunga, and a short journey by rail took us to the city, which is situated on the lovely Hauraki Gulf, whose glorious blue waters encircle the shore like the waist of a young beauty adorned with a girdle of sapphires. I do not think I have ever seen anything more strikingly beautiful than this brilliant sparkling blue sea and the harbour washed by its waters. I have frequently seen Sydney, of which the Australians are so justly proud, and can never make up my mind as to the rival merits of Sydney and Auckland. If the city is not in itself beautiful, it possesses, with its wonderful harbour and picturesque suburbs, a reserve fund of loveliness that is a "joy for ever."

Of these suburbs Remuera is one of the most charming. Here some fine houses are to be seen facing the Hauraki Gulf, and the views are quite entrancing, forming a series of landscapes in miniature, the perfection of which words cannot convey. Magnificent panoramas are also visible from Mount Eden,

a lofty hill, once a volcanic mountain 644 feet high, about two miles from Auckland, and quite easy of ascent. Wherever the eye rests, either near, or to the distant horizon where Barrier Island rises, or turning towards the Waitakerei Ranges that bound the Tasman Sea, the sight is superb, for to the natural beauties of form are added the glories of colour; those powerful agents that render our glorious world instinct with life. From six volcanic hills in the immediate vicinity of Auckland very fine views can be obtained; the hills are Mount Hobson, Mount St. John, Mount Wellington, Mount Albert, One-tree-hill, and the Three Kings. Near the last named are some extensive lava caves, formerly the burying places of the Maori people.

The district of Auckland abounds with delightful excursions. I remember going one day by steamer to North Shore, and walking to an hotel built on the edge of a fresh-water lake called "Pupuke." The lake was evidently an old crater and of very great depth. We went into the hotel, and after tea were taken up to a tower that commanded the lake, and looked down on a fairy-like scene. The pale green sheet of water was edged round its entire circumference with a belt of magnificent Pohutukawa, or Christmas trees as they are called, for they come into full bloom just at that season, every tree being a glowing and gorgeous mass of deepest crimson blossoms. The sea lay beyond, and the fresh waters of the lake were apparently separated only by a narrow grass-covered bank from the salt waters of the Gulf. It quite looked as if one cut from a spade

would destroy the frail restraining barrier, and let the sea in to overwhelm both lake and trees. The illusion was perfect, though I was told that the lake was really about two hundred yards distant from the ocean.

A most interesting spot, within a few hours by steamer from Auckland, is Kawau Island, formerly the property and residence of Sir George Grey. I spent a most delightful ten days on this beautiful island. The steamer leaving Auckland, skirts the coast, passing sandy bays fringed with Pohutukawa trees and through many groups of islands, until it arrives at the small but pretty landlocked harbour of Little Omaha. The house, which is large and very comfortable, faces the bay and its little landing-stage; and the view from the front windows is charming. There is game of all sorts in the island; pheasants, quail, deer, wallaby (a small species of kangaroo) and racoons, beside, of course, the ubiquitous rabbit that is ever with the sportsman in the colonies. The sea teems with fish and there is plenty of sport. Many a pleasant fishing excursion was organised amongst the ladies whilst the men were out shooting. One day the sportsmen came back with a wallaby they had shot. The animal was skinned, and the tail was made into soup. We had often heard of wallaby tail soup, and were determined not to lose this opportunity of tasting the delicacy. In due course the soup graced the dinner-table; we thought it horrid; it was so dreadfully strong in taste, and the odour was quite overpowering.

The garden, which is at the back of the house, was full of curious plants, shrubs, fruit and flowers

that Sir George Grey, who was a great botanist and a passionate lover of flowers, had collected at great expense from all parts of the world. It is not very well kept up. Out of the furniture that had formerly been in the house during Sir George Grey's time, there remained a set of book-shelves and a very beautifully inlaid cabinet with coats of arms on the panels. Round one of the shelves of the book-case ran the motto, "Learn from the past; use well the present; improve the future." The truth and utility of the maxim struck me very forcibly, and seemed to recall all I had ever heard of that good man; and as I stood in the solitude of the large room in the house set in the midst of that lonely island, I felt that the spirit of the great man must be near, the truth of the saying came to my mind: "He being dead yet speaketh."

New Zealand has honoured and mourned many illustrious dead, but they are not forgotten, they lie enshrined in that grandest of Pantheons, the heart of the people. The late Premier, Richard John Seddon, had truly gained the heart of the people. He was a man of wide views, great commonsense combined with justice, keen insight and untiring energy; a true patriot who loved the old country where he was born, and gathered to his large heart New Zealand, the land of his adoption, which in his last hours he so beautifully called "God's own country." Peace be with him.

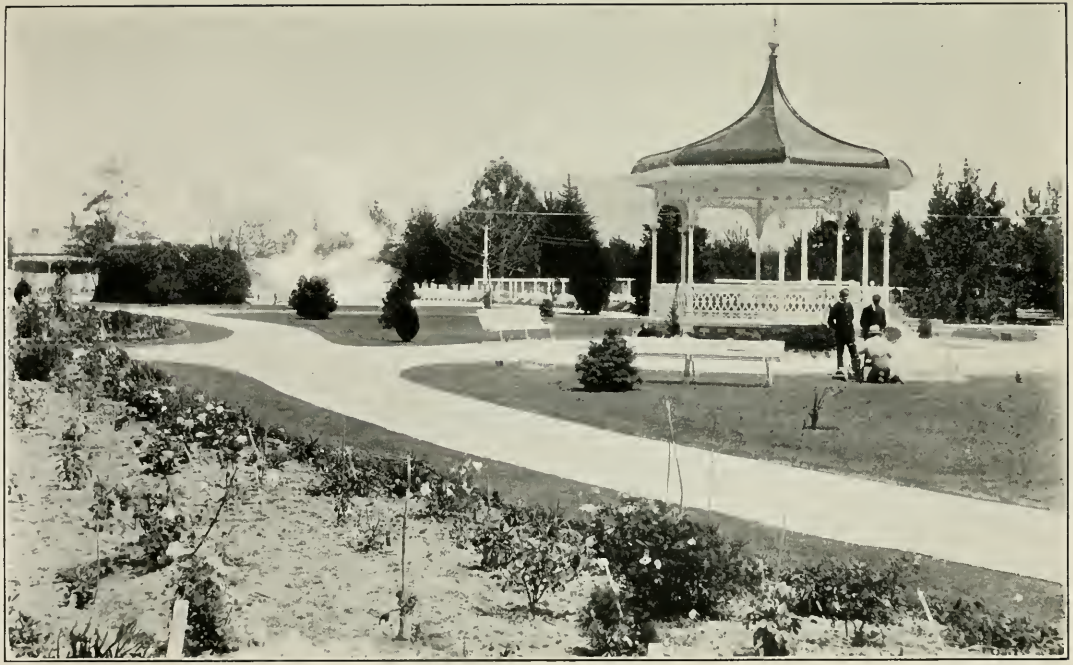
CHAPTER II.

ROTORUA HOT SPRINGS

I WAS fortunate enough to witness the departure of the ninth contingent for the war in South Africa. Hearing when they were to leave we made our way to Queen Street, the main street of Auckland debouching on the quay, taking up our position at the bottom, and watched the march past.

The band played some bright inspiriting music as the troops stepped out briskly, with an easy-swinging pace. They looked very smart and workmanlike in their easy-fitting uniforms of khaki, their gaiters and the jaunty terai hat turned up at one side with its daring little plume of cock's feathers that fluttered defiantly in the breeze. How picturesque and practical, too, was this head-gear compared with the heavy, flat-topped cap with which our troops are disfigured. I believe the shape of a cap or the cut and colour of a uniform often affects recruiting; for the British soldier is touchy about his appearance, and likes to look to the greatest advantage (small blame to him); indeed Tommy Atkins is not above indulging in a little pardonable swagger when escorting his best girl for a walk.

Not only was the appearance of the men smart



IN THE GARDENS, ROTORUA. [*To face p.* 18.

and workmanlike, but their physique was splendid. All men of good average height, wiry, strong and alert-looking, with healthy bronzed faces which gave one the idea that they had lived a great deal in the open air; they were not growing and weedy youths, but well-seasoned men. The farewells had been said and the men, with laughing cheery faces, shouted, "We're off, we are going to fight alongside the troops from the old country." Relations and friends waved their handkerchiefs replying, "God bless you, boys, come back to us soon," as the steamer moved gently away. When she was clear and well out from the wharf she was surrounded by the Auckland Yacht Club squadron, like a flock of white swans, little ships hovered round the big steamer, spreading their snow-white sails, which looked like wings, as they gracefully glided outwards into the blue and glittering waters of the Hauraki Gulf. Meanwhile cheer after cheer rent the air and echoed from ship to shore, but the eyes of the earnest watchers on land were misty and dim with unshed tears at the thought of those brave hearts that now beat so gaily yet never might return; and they moved slowly and sadly away, with many a backward glance as the vessel faded into the far distance freighted with her precious cargo.

They had loyally given of their hearts' best.

We were anxious to visit Rotorua, the centre of the wonderful Hot Lakes District, that strange region of which we had heard such marvellous accounts, so, taking the quick through train which left Auckland in the morning (there is only one

express a day), we started for Rotorua. The journey was delightful and the scenery at times charming, especially near the little township of Mercer, through which flows that large and beautiful river the Waikato. Not very far from here we passed Ngaruwhia, where an annual regatta was in progress, to which I shall refer later. Thus we had plenty to interest us till the good-natured old guard, a well-known entity on the Auckland-Rotorua line, put his head in at the door of the carriage saying: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are coming to a very fine bit of native bush, you will see it best by standing outside on the platform of the carriage."

We went out and stood as he directed. The engine, puffing, snorting and tugging the long chain of cars with powerful jerks, drew us slowly but surely upwards, and as the pass gradually rose the outlook was very fine; the trees, of which there were an immense variety, with creepers, ferns and tree ferns (Pungas), were very beautiful and of great size. At one time we were running along a narrow neck of land with a deep and splendidly-wooded ravine on either side, and a little while after leaving the ravine we emerged into the open track and obtained our first glimpse of the beautiful Lake of Rotorua, with Mokoia Island in the distance, the ancient home of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. How lovely it looked in the light of the westering sun, decked in the glowing colours of the closing day, with the fresh cool breeze gently ruffling its placid surface! It is one of those pictures that will ever remain indelibly impressed upon my mind.

On reaching the railway station, we met our friends, who had kindly taken rooms for the party at Brent's Bathgate House; and as the hotel was not more than ten minutes' distance from the station, we walked up, sending the luggage on by omnibus. On leaving the railway platform one of the party, turning abruptly to me, said, "Do you smell it?" "Smell what?" I asked, surprised at the question. "Why, the sulphur from the hot springs." And as we rounded the corner of the station, the most horrible nauseating odour greeted our olfactory nerves. "Is it always like this?" "Shall we ever get accustomed to it?" I remarked. "Oh! yes," came the reassuring reply, "you will soon not mind it at all; besides, the odour of these springs is not to be compared to that at Wackarewarewa.

We soon arrived at our destination, and, passing through a pretty garden where a fountain was throwing its spray into a stone basin full of gold-fish and water plants, we were welcomed by the kind proprietor, Mr. Brent, and his pleasant wife. After taking possession of our rooms and making a hasty toilette, we adjourned to the dining saloon, a fine room filled with small separate tables, and were waited on by a staff of neat-looking girls, in white cap and apron, a great improvement on the hot and greasy-looking waiter shuffling or creaking about, with a serviette of doubtful whiteness thrown over his arm. Dinner being ended, our friends proposed a turn in the gardens, which were lighted by electricity.

We first visited the bath-house, consisting of a

large swimming bath for ladies, whilst another of rather larger dimensions, called the Duchess Bath, was available on certain days alternately for ladies and gentlemen. This bath was opened by the Princess of Wales during the royal visit to Rotorua. Besides the public baths there are private baths to be had at a slightly increased cost. The gentlemen also had their baths, both public and private. Two kinds of chemical water are in use at the Rotorua Bath House, the strongest being the Priests' Bath (Te Pupunitanga). This water comes bubbling up from the natural flooring of the bath, which is sand and gravel, and is acidic. The other is Madame Rachel's bath (Whangapipiro). This is alkaline and silicious, and much milder in its effects than the former. Some of these acid baths have nothing to equal them in the world. In fact the district is literally honey-combed with mineral springs, all possessing varied and most valuable properties. On the high road to Wackarewarewa a tiny stream of the purest alum water runs across the road, coming from apparently nowhere.

Leaving the bath-house at Rotorua, we proceeded to the gardens; the paths being lighted by electricity, the effect was most weird; as we approached a small concrete tank, surrounded by strong iron railings, we saw several miniature geysers throwing up jets of boiling water; these were constructed by the late Mr. Malfroy, and have been playing for years, the water being artificially supplied by one of the natural boiling springs in the grounds.

The scene was indeed strange, the bluish and

ghostly light, the steaming and bubbling of the geysers, the nauseating odours and the hollow sound of the pathway under our feet gave one a feeling of uneasy insecurity. We were taken through a wide road that became narrower as we proceeded; it was bordered by high hedges; the light here was very dim; as we were beyond the range of the electric globes, the ground that seemed to become more hollow as we advanced resounded most unpleasantly, and I felt in an absolute panic lest the path would break through and land us against our will in the realms of Pluto. Our friends cautioned us never at any time to leave the beaten track, as the ground was very dangerous, from the deep holes called porridge-pots, that were filled with hot liquid mud that bubbles incessantly. Seen for the first time, it makes a deep and lasting impression, and we were all glad to find ourselves safely back at the hotel.

The following morning we sallied forth to view the gardens by daylight; they are most beautifully kept, the lawns like velvet, and a profusion of flowers in the highest state of cultivation. One very large plot of ground was covered with rose bushes bearing magnificent blooms; this bed is quite close to the large open spring of boiling Rachel water, the vapour and fumes of which pass over the flowers, and does not appear to injure either their colour or perfume; indeed, they seem to thrive in the strange and nauseous atmosphere.

There is a fine bowling-green with croquet and tennis-lawns, a band-stand and a pretty little re-

freshment-house (*Te runanga*). Here some nice-looking Maori girls in their national costume waited on us under the direction of a lady-manager, who provided excellent coffee and cakes, with cream ices that could not be bettered anywhere. Near the tea-house is "The Queen's Drive," a broad carriage road about a quarter of a mile long, running in a straight line down to the Rotorua lake; this road is edged by very wide flower-beds on either side, a glowing mass of colour, forming a most brilliant approach to the lake.

Not far from the croquet-ground is an aviary with some large cages constructed with communicating doors; here were specimens of birds indigenous to New Zealand, and a few animals recently imported from America, amongst them five racoons, and these funny little creatures became most popular. Great numbers of people assembled daily to see them fed at 4 o'clock by the official in charge, who was very proud of them, for they were beginning to get quite tame, and would take food from his hand and cling to his arms and legs. However, one day when he went to feed them in the morning there came a great shock to the poor old man, for two out of the five had disappeared; the little rascals had with their sharp teeth gnawed through the strong wire netting, and had got away.

Then there was trouble—messengers were sent in all directions, and, after hours of fruitless search, they reported the coons as having been seen in the kitchen garden, feasting on the best they could get; but every subsequent account of their *locale* differed

from the preceding one. Day after day passed and the authorities at last got desperate, for the newspapers were taking up the "coon scandal" vigorously in the absence of war news and a scarcity of earthquakes. Every man who owned a gun was hugely rejoiced one morning to see a notice in the leading daily paper offering a reward of £10 to anyone who would shoot the missing coons. This tempting offer only made matters worse, and the tone of the papers, that was decidedly sarcastic, became more acrimonious and ran somewhat as follows:—

> It is quite scandalous to hear that two out of the five racoons so recently imported at great expense from America should have been allowed to escape. So much money has already been spent on adding to the little zoological collection at Rotorua, the least that could have been done was to look carefully after the animals when they were there; besides which, the squandering of public funds on first importing these pests into the country and then offering rewards for their destruction is quite shameful. Have the colonies not yet learnt a bitter lesson from rabbits, sparrows, weasles, and such terrors that have become the plague of the country, and now, forsooth, coons!

With a few more hard words the commotion at last subsided. Nobody claimed the reward, for no one shot the coons, so the jovial little pests were, I hope, none the worse after making their daring bid for the joys of liberty.

About two miles from Rotorua is situated one of the great geyser centres of the thermal district,

the little Maori village of Wackarewarewa. Omnibuses and motors ply constantly backwards and forwards for the convenience of sightseers; the road is very bad, and by the time the wretched horses have clambered to the top of one mound, they flounder hopelessly down into the next hollow and dust obscures everything; but the road has been like this for years and is likely, I fear, to remain so. At last we arrived and pulled up near the little bridge that spans the stream flowing at the foot of Wackarewarewa. Here we paused to see the Maori children dive from the bridge into the stream, and this they do in a most expert way. Then other children assembled and clamoured to be allowed to dance the *haka*, the national dance, in which all the dreadful accidents of war are portrayed, the capture and massacre of the enemy, all in mimic pantomime, accompanied by the most revolting grimaces.

Leaving the bridge, we entered through a gate into the geyser-ground and were taken in charge by a Maori guide, who escorted us round the geysers, pointing out each object of interest and narrating any legend belonging to it. I first saw the geysers at Wackarewarewa under the guidance of my old friend Sophia early in 1901, and on my second visit to New Zealand some two years later, I noticed a very great difference; there was a considerable diminution of energy; indeed, just before I left the country after my second visit, Pohutu, the largest and most active of the geysers, had not played up for many months.

The torpedo—which was in the centre of a pool of water, and in appearance resembled a huge black greasy-looking bubble, and used to burst with the dull report of a shell that could be heard at any part of the reservation—was now hardly audible. The cauldron, that at times flung its boiling waters twenty feet above its rocky basin and then overflowed into the little watercourse valley, never rose now (it was the signal or indicator when Pohutu was going to play); and the various porridge pots and little fumaroles were all much less active than before. It is an undoubted fact that the thermal energy in Wackarewarewa is gradually lessening, though it is quite impossible to say where the pent-up forces will break out again. I was talking one day with Mr. Clark, at that time caretaker of the geyser grounds, a clever man but quite an oddity in his way, and was asking his idea on the eruption at Martinique which had taken place a short time before. "Well," he replied, "it is very hard to say, for we who live here in safety"—at this moment Pohutu, the big geyser, with a thundering roar threw up a grand column of water. I looked at Mr. Clark as the word "safety" left his mouth to the accompaniment of the geyser's roaring. Safety, indeed, I thought to myself, with all this boiling and seething under one's feet, but not a muscle of Mr. Clark's face moved, and he went on quite composedly to say that, although it might be different where volcanoes were concerned, he considered that by far the safest place in New Zealand was amongst the thermal activity, as this was the safety-valve that

let out the mischief and prevented a great "blow up." To this I meekly assented, for I knew nothing at all about the matter, so could not venture to argue with an expert.

One of the curious sights of Wackarewarewa is the soaping of the Wairoa Geyser. This soaping of the geyser is done when any special visitors wish to see it, and permission has to be obtained from one of the Government officials at Wellington. The process is interesting. The permission being granted an hour is fixed (usually about 3 P.M.), the spectators assemble at a safe distance, whilst a chosen few go with the caretaker and guides to the mouth of the geyser, which is protected by a wooden cover; this is removed, and a bag containing two or three bars of yellow soap shredded into small pieces, is handed to the lady who is to have the privilege of awaking the geyser from its sleep, the contents of the bag are shaken in, and then the spectators retreat out of range of the boiling spray. The interval of about even or eight minutes is the quickest for the geyser to come into action, but of later years it takes longer. A roaring noise begins, and then the white foaming soap-suds rise and then sink rapidly; it rises a few feet higher each time, falling again, and this is repeated many times till Wairoa attains its full energy, and in one magnificent upward burst it dashes into the air as if eager to meet the blue sky and brilliant sunshine after its long sleep in the earth's dark recesses.

I have seen Wairoa soaped eighteen times, and never do I remember seeing it twice the same. On

WAIROA GEYSER. [*To face p.* 28.

one never-to-be-forgotten occasion by some peculiar effect of sunlight, a most vivid and perfect rainbow spanned the foaming white column of water. The Maoris have a superstitious dislike to the soaping of the geyser. They shake their heads and talk of Atoua (God) being angry, they think it unwise to interfere with the forces of nature, and perhaps they may be right.

An amusing story is told of the late Mr. Seddon in connection with the soaping of Wairoa Geyser. It sometimes happens that the geyser although soaped refuses to play, and on one occasion when the late Premier was present the geyser was in a bad humour, and although a double quantity of soap was thrown in it would not play up. Whilst Mr. Seddon and the disappointed spectators were expressing their annoyance, a good-humoured voice called out of the crowd, "Ah, Dick, you can soft soap the people, but you can't soap the geyser quite so easily."

Two or three of the smaller geysers play occasionally, the Pigeon and the Prince of Wales' Feathers, but the energy is no longer as great as of old.

Before bidding good-bye to Wackarewarewa I must tell another story in connection with Wairoa Geyser. The daughter of a distinguished visitor having expressed great anxiety to be allowed to soap the geyser herself, a telegram was sent to Wellington asking for the necessary permission, and when the astonishing reply came back, it read as follows: "Certainly let Miss —— soap herself!"

CHAPTER III.

MAORI FOLK-LORE

It was a lovely day early in March when I started from Rotorua to pay another visit to Sophia. Autumn had laid a gentle finger on the land, and was changing the foliage into crimson and gold; the sky was turquoise blue, whilst the air, exhilarating like the nectar of the gods, made one feel that it was good to live. The rickety old omnibus with its three horses jolted and creaked over the uneven road, and at last pulled up close to the bridge that crosses the stream at the foot of Wakarewarewa. I found my way to Sophia's *wharé*, and the door being closed I knocked. "Come in," said a feeble voice; and as I was about to enter Sophia herself opened the door. She said she had an attack of rheumatism and had been lying down.

The little *wharé* consisted of one room with a verandah. It contained two beds and a chest of drawers. The walls were covered with framed photographs, coloured pictures of Maori beauties, Bible texts, and advertisements of household necessaries, from sewing-cotton to Scotch whiskey. Over Sophia's own bed was a very nice picture of our late

Queen, who was greatly beloved by the Maories, and called by them "Kuini Wickitoria."

Sophia invited me to sit down, and placed herself on a cushioned seat in the centre of the tiny room. I then reminded her of the promise she had made to tell me a few legends. "Yes, lady, with pleasure I will tell you what I can; but I will not tell you any stories about the Ngapouhis (another Maori tribe), for I do not like them." "Never mind, Sophia," I replied, "just tell me what you wish."

"Very well, lady, we will then talk about Tarawera, for my heart is always there, and whether I sleep or wake I see my little house at Wairoa, under the shadow of the hill; I see the creek with its blue water; and my husband, with the many relations and friends that are now gone. Ah, well, I will go on with my story. Long, long before the Maori people came from Hawiki to New Zealand in their big canoes, there came to Tarawera mountain one Tamahoé. He was *Atoua* (a spirit), and took up his abode in a cave on the mountain side. There are three very high peaks on this range, and they are called Narahoewhia, Tarawera, and Wahunga, and on the last all the great chiefs of our people are buried.

"Tamahoé had been living on Tarawera for a great number of years—and no one knew how long he had been there—when the Maoris came over in their canoes with their chief Ngatorohirungi. Now Tamahoé, who was partly mortal, had the misfortune to hurt his foot, and Ngatorohirungi, who had climbed the mountain to give him battle, found the injured

chief, and because he was lame came upon him suddenly, and, taking a very unfair advantage, wounded him seriously and kicked him down the mountain into the cave, where he died; and the mountain has ever since been tabooed.

"Having done this bad deed, Ngatorohirungi, being afraid to stay there, went off with his people to Tongariro.

"Now on Tarawera mountain, lady, there was a quantity of honey made by the wild bees. No one ought to have touched it, as everything there was tabooed (sacred and forbidden); but some young Maori men went up the mountain and took the honey, filling up billies (tin pots with covers) and other vessels with it; and they brought it all away to Te Ariki, and some to Rotomahana, where they gave it to the old chief, Rangihéhuwa, who lived at the foot of the Pink Terrace. Now I was going to guide my visitors round the Terraces, and when we landed from the boats I saw the old chief Rangihéhuwa, and he offered me some of the honey; but I said, 'No, thank you,' for I knew it was tabooed; therefore it would be wrong to take it. For had not the two wise old men of my tribe shown me all over the mountain when I first came to Tarawera from the Bay of Islands, and did we not see Tamahoé's cave, and in it his big comb with which he used to comb his hair? It was lying on a stone in the cave. And did not the old men with white hair tell me that everything on Tarawera was taboo? So I had not forgotten their warning, and when Rangihéhuwa wanted me to take this honey, I said 'No.' I would

not have it or let my people take it either, for I knew the danger, so would have nothing to do with it. Yes—I knew.

"Lady, it is strange but true, every one of those people that eat of the tabooed honey, every soul, perished in the eruption of Tarawera, that took place very soon after; but I and my people, who did not touch it, were all saved; and so we came safely and thankfully out of the great disaster of 1886."

"Lady, what I am going to tell you happened at the time of the great war between the *pakehas* and the Maoris. It is from the Bay of Islands. I remember, also, that just then we Maoris were living mostly on fern-root and fish.

"A large party of us were going, including some great chiefs, in a big canoe from our home on the Island of Motu Arohea (Robertson's Island) to Kourorarika, a place a little way down the coast, and now called Russell (it is there, lady, that I was born). We were going to sell peaches and potatoes, and had been paddling along at an easy pace for some time, as the canoe was heavily laden and there were also a great many passengers; so we were not hurried, and had plenty of time to look about us. Suddenly one of the people cried out, 'Look there! What is that?' When away, far across the water, where sea and sky met, we saw a great commotion, and the disturbance came nearer and nearer; the waves rose all around us, lashed into white foam; the canoe rocked horribly, and we all shrieked in

our terror, 'The Taniwhas! The Taniwhas are coming!'

"Every Maori believes in the Taniwhas. They are spirits that inhabit the bodies of fishes. They were, perhaps, something like whales, and were very large and fierce. And, as they came swimming up fast and faster still, lashing the water, we people in the canoe were very frightened and cried out to each other, 'Which one in this canoe has done a bad thing? Who is wrong? Whichever one it is, the Taniwhas are coming to take that person away.' And there was great trouble, for every one suspected his neighbour and feared for the consequences. Several of the monsters came up and caused great waves to rise, and the water splashed right over a woman seated at the end of the canoe. She then became frightened, and confessed she had taken some tabooed wood to burn, and it was for this sin that the Taniwhas were coming to take her away.

"Now there was a good and friendly Taniwha called Renutta, and when he saw these other Taniwhas coming, bent on mischief and giving trouble, he was determined to protect these people, for some of them were great chiefs. So when the canoe tilted on one side—for the Taniwhas wanted to upset it and drown us—then when it nearly capsized, Renutta by partly getting under put it straight again. He then ordered these bad Taniwhas to go away, and not dare to trouble the people in the canoe, as they were all under his protection. They vanished then as quickly as they came, and the water that had been boiling and foaming round us now calmed

down. And so, after our terrible fright and narrow escape from drowning, we were all saved—thanks to the good Renutta."

"There are many stories about the Taniwhas. One I remember in particular was very sad, for it was about a woman I knew well when I was a girl. She was a slave (for we had slaves in those days), and had been taken away from her home when a child by a chief of our tribe, who made war on another tribe and killed her father and mother. She was a tiny woman—a nice little thing, with gentle manners and a good temper. Her name was Rungi. I liked her very much, and we often talked together. She used to do the cooking and made herself generally useful in the chief's house, besides getting wood and drawing water. She went out early one morning along the sea-beach to gather driftwood for the fires, and in doing this she unknowingly took up a piece of tabooed wood that had come from some tabooed place. The wood was for the *kapa*, that is, a pile of stones which are heated red hot, and then water is poured over them, and this makes steam which cooks the vegetables, and is what the *pakehas* call 'steaming.' Well, Rungi had collected her bundle of wood, and, carrying it, returned home.

"She lighted the *kapa* outside the house, and when this was done she took a piece of stick from the fire and lit her pipe with it. She then sat down to smoke, and when the pipe was finished she went into the house. Her friends noticed that she appeared very odd in her manner, for she gazed all

round in a foolish way with a vacant look, staring with wide-open eyes as if she saw something very strange. She did not say a word to anyone, but presently walked quietly out of the house straight down to the seashore, slowly and almost unwillingly, as we remembered afterwards. It seemed as if something were drawing her nearer and nearer to the great water. Into the sea she went, walking steadily until out of her depth, and then she disappeared without a splash or struggle. Lady, the Taniwhas had forced her out, and she had to go to them. They had taken her away.

"You will say, why did we not stop her? But we never for a moment thought she would go out of her depth and be carried away. About one hour after—it may have been longer—the poor little woman's body was washed ashore by the incoming tide, and when we lifted her up she was quite dead and cold, and her left eye was gone. This was the Taniwhas' doing. It was their mark, for they always take out the left eye when they wish to punish a mortal for breaking the taboo. We girls were sitting on the beach sewing roundabouts (pinafores worn by the Maori women) when we saw poor little Rungi walk down into the sea and disappear. We also saw her body washed up afterwards, and I was one of those who helped to carry her in: so we did not imagine or invent the thing. We thought it was very hard, for Rungi was not in any way to blame, as she did not know the wood was tabooed; but the laws of taboo are very strict, and the Taniwhas are always watching for people who transgress them.

"And that is how the poor little woman was lost. I often think of her, though I am old now and it is many years ago, but I liked her. And that, lady, is all I have to say about poor little Rungi. I have told you what I saw with my own eyes, and not what I heard from other people."

"There was once in the Bay of Islands a great chief called Papahourihia, who was much beloved and highly honoured by his people and feared by his enemies. He was, moreover, so brave in battle and so true in love that the people thought there could be none better fitted to be their leader; and they were, therefore, always willing and ready to obey his orders, no matter how hard the task. Now Papahourihia loved with all the passion and strength of his great heart a beautiful spirit woman. Lady, she was not in this world, but down, down in the other world," said Sophia, waving her hands and pointing to the ground with a mysterious look.

"Papahourihia loved her very dearly, and his heart would burn within him when he thought of her; and he would dream in his sleep at night, when all was dark and still and the noise of the village was hushed and the voices of the people were at rest; he would dream then that he held her in his arms and pressed her to his heart; and to him it seemed as if she were really on this earth—as if her head really lay upon his bosom, and he could feel the beating of her heart and the soft pressure of her beautiful form. But, lady," said Sophia, "as I told you, their love was in the other world, and not here.

"Now, of this love there was born a spirit child, a son, and his father called him Tegnakahi. In time he grew up, and the people in the Bay of Islands used to see him flying through the air in the dusk of the evening after sunset, shining bright like a comet, and his head could easily be distinguished apart from the shining cloud-like appearance that surrounded him.

"During the time of the war with the *pakehas* he would go to the scene of the fighting, find out all the news, and, if there was a battle going on, would bring word how it was progressing. At night he would visit the houses of the people, and would bang and tear at the doors to get in till they thought the woodwork would be broken; but the thumping, although so violent, did not seem to do any real damage. Tegnakahi would come into the room, though their eyes could not see him, for at such times he was invisible, and greet them, 'Tenakuta! Tenakuta!' give them news of other places, warn them of any coming storms or trouble or danger to their crops, and occasionally retail village gossip, and create great scandal by telling little secrets, such as, 'So-and-so's wife was being made love to by another man.'

"Now," said Sophia, "the first time I heard of Tegnakahi was during the life of my first husband, Tehakiroe (his Christian name was Colenso, for he had been baptised). When my first son was born Tegnakahi came to our house, and said to Tehakiroe, 'Why did you marry that pretty girl? She is too good for you, you ugly old fellow! A great many

SOPHIA. [*To face p.* 38.

(*From a Photograph by R. Seldon, Wairoa.*)

younger men are after her; you will have trouble through this before long.' Tegnakahi said this out of pure mischief, for though my husband was ugly, still he was a fine man—very big, and a great fighter. Lady, he was born to fight! For whenever there was a battle between the tribes he used to go off and take part in the fighting, which was the only thing he cared for, never troubling himself about us; but when he came back he was lazy and would do nothing. Then we poor women of his house had bad times, for he made us work very hard and carry heavy loads. So Tegnakahi did not do us much good by his remarks, although I do not think he meant any real harm; but he made Tehakiroe very jealous.

"When the people were sick their friends would take them to Tegnakahi, but he told them to go to the *pakehas* doctors, as when they brought the sick to him he had to take their spirits away—they died. He also told them not to listen to the wicked Tohungas, but to say their prayers to the great *Atoua*, and not to steal, lie or kill, or do any bad thing, and then they would be happy. So, you see, Tegnakahi, though at times mischievous, was on the whole a good spirit; and he still exists at Hokianga amongst my people, though he never comes here (Wakarewarewa). And that is all I know of Tegnakahi."

I went one day to see Sophia, who was telling me this legend, and, seeming doubtful of a fact, she said, "Wait a moment: I will call my Auntie. She

is very old, and will help me, for she remembers many things." She returned with the most extraordinary old woman I had ever seen. Her name was Ahénutta Tehrangitantini. She was eighty-eight years old, and the sister of Sophia's husband. Her face was broad and flat, the colour of yellow parchment and scored with deep wrinkles. The mouth and chin were tattooed with blue marks, and in the centre of her mouth one solitary tooth was visible. She resembled the grotesque gargoyle of an ancient church. She entered the room greeting me with "Tenaqua," and, shaking hands, sat down on the floor and began replying to Sophia's questions, who then proceeded with the legend of Kataoré the Lizard.

"Now, lady," said Sophia, "Kataoré was a very large lizard, and he lived in a cave on a hill overlooking the beautiful Blue Lake at Wairoa. He was a good lizard: there was nothing bad or malicious about him, and he was *Atoua*.

"He would always be able to tell when the bad weather—either storm or heavy rain—was coming; and he could show equally well when the good weather was setting in, and the wind blowing from the best side; for he would turn his head when sitting at the mouth of his cave so that the people could see him, and would in this way tell them what they wished to know. So they looked on Kataoré as a prophet, and by his help in foretelling—for he was never wrong—they always knew what weather to expect.

"The people loved and thought a great deal of

SOPHIA AWAKING WAIROA GEYSER. [*To face p.* 40.

him, and said there was not such another lizard in the world. They made this boast so often, and were so proud of possessing such a friend, that the talk of Kataoré's cleverness went out over all the land.

"Now, there was a tribe called the Natitamas, who hated the Touhorangis for many things, but above all they were jealous of their possession of Kataoré, the clever lizard. So they called up all their fighting men, for they feared the brave Touhorangis, and set out for the mountain above the Blue Lake armed with their war clubs and other fighting weapons; and they went to Kataoré's cave and there they cruelly killed his body by beating it to pieces, but could not destroy his spirit for he was *Atoua*.

"When the Touhorangis found that their good friend the lizard was killed, they sent for all their bravest men and attacked the Natitamas; and there was a big fight—a very big fight, lady. Much blood was shed, and many people killed, but most on the side of the Natitamas: for were they not in the wrong, and had they not killed Kataoré through wicked jealousy? So the anger of the Touhorangis was very great, and they turned this bad tribe right out of Rotorua district. So they dispersed and scattered by way of Taupo, and fled down into Taranaki, where they settled, and are there to this day.

"After this fierce fight there was a great *tangi* (burial) and much weeping and sorrow, for many were killed, and the hearts of the people were sad with mourning for their relations, the brave fighters that were dead, and also for their loved friend the

lizard. And so, lady, it was that Kataoré's death was fully avenged."

"Lastly, you shall hear the story of Hinemoa, the Beautiful, and there you can see her picture," said Sophia, pointing with her finger to a coloured print that hung on the wall of her *wharé*. "Hinemoa was very beautiful. Her eyes were like the deep dark pools of the lake, her lips like the crimson berries of autumn, and her form slender and delicate as the graceful white crane. She was the daughter of Umukaria, a chief of high rank, and her mother's name was Hinemaru, and they lived at the village of Owhatta by the edge of the Rotorua Lake. Across this lake, on the Island of Mokoia, there dwelt a young chief called Tutanékai. He was the illegitimate son of Rangiura by Tuwharetoa, who had run away from her husband, Whakaue. Tutanékai was a strong and handsome young man, and he loved the beautiful Hinemoa passionately. But, lady, at first he feared to speak to her as she was so much higher in rank; and then all the tribe thought so much of her great beauty, they did not think there was anyone good enough to wed her. Tutanékai's half-brothers also, were dying of envy to carry her off as their bride. But Hinemoa herself loved Tutanékai, and sometimes at the public games and other meetings they had a chance of speaking to each other. So one day Hinemoa promised her lover that she would paddle across in her canoe over the lake to Mokoia and become his wife.

"On the summer nights soft music used to float

over the water. It was Tutanékai playing on his shell trumpet, and this they had arranged was to be the signal for Hinemoa to cross over. When the night came on, and all was still in the village houses, Hinemoa stole gently down to the shore, thinking she would be able to get her canoe; but, alas! alas! no canoe was near the water's edge, for her father, who did not approve of Tutanékai's wooing on account of the difference in rank, had ordered all the canoes to be pulled up high and dry on the shore, as he and his people suspected Hinemoa would make an attempt to go to her lover. So Hinemoa could not get away, and sitting down she wept bitterly when she thought of her beloved Tutanékai, and the music still floated sadly over the water that separated her from her dear one. Many nights her slender form flitted down to the shore, and she was ever thinking how to reach him, when at last an idea came to her—she would swim to her love. 'Yes,' Hinemoa whispered to herself, 'it is the only way.' So going back to the *wharé* she got some empty gourds, which she strung together, and put them under her arms to support her when tired with swimming.

"There was a rock called Iri-iri-kapua by the edge of the shore and there she left her clothes, and, gliding with the buoyant gourds into deep water, began to swim with vigorous strokes till she was tired and breathless, when she rested awhile supporting herself on the gourds, which floated lightly on the surface of the water. The night was dark and she was often very frightened. There

was no moon, and the starlight seemed faint. She was afraid of many things, and in the darkness of the night she could not see where she was swimming to. A few more strokes, and a large black object appeared not far from her. A convulsion of fear swept over her, but she cried out Tutanékai's name, and this gave her courage; so she swam on, and as she neared the dark object that filled her with such terror she found it was only a post that her father, Umukaria, had put into the lake. So with a thankful heart she clung to it and rested her aching limbs.

"Then again she heard the sweet music that came from Tutanékai's lips. It cheered and guided her, till at last she reached Wai-kimihia, the hot spring now called Hinemoa's Bath, and near to which was the village of Tutanékai. When the tired and shivering maiden reached this place she got into the hot spring to warm herself, for she was trembling with cold and fear after her long swim across the lake. Whilst she was there Tutanékai, who had been feeling thirsty, sent a slave with a calabash to draw some cold water. The man went close to where Hinemoa was concealed; so she called out to him, feigning the voice of a man. 'Who is that water for?' she asked. 'It is for Tutanékai,' he replied. 'Well, give me some,' said Hinemoa. He handed her the calabash, and when she had drunk it she threw down the vessel and it broke. Then the slave said, 'What have you done? Why have you broken the calabash of Tutanékai?' But Hinemoa remained silent and did not reply.

"The man went back and told his master what

had happened; but Tutanékai said, 'Never mind; take another calabash and bring me the water.' So the slave took a second calabash and returned to the lake. When he reached the shore, Hinemoa again said, 'For whom are you drawing the water?' and the man replied, 'For Tutanékai.' 'I too am thirsty —give it to me,' said the maiden. The man gave it to her as before. She then drank it, and for the second time threw the calabash on the ground with all her force and broke it in many pieces. The slave ran back in great haste to Tutanékai, who asked, 'Where is the water?' 'I have not got it,' the man replied; 'the two calabashes are broken.' 'Who did this thing?' cried Tutanékai in a great rage. 'A man down at the hot spring,' said the slave. 'Show him to me,' shouted Tutanékai, who was now very angry, 'and I will break his head to pieces!' Then he seized his war club and ran off in hot haste to the spring. 'Where are you who broke my calabashes? Come out, and I will beat you to pieces with my club!'

"Hinemoa, who had hidden herself under the rocks and drooping ferns, knew the voice of her lover, and as he came round the edge of the pool, feeling among the plants and grasses for his unknown enemy, with his war club upraised in his hand, he was about to strike a downward blow, when Hinemoa put out her hand, which Tutanékai seized, crying, 'Who are you? Come here—I must see your face.' She looked upwards at him, and her soft voice replied, 'It is I—it is Hinemoa.' 'Art thou really Hinemoa? Thou art not a spirit of the

waters?' 'No, Tutanékai; it is indeed thine own Hinemoa,' she whispered.

"He cast away his club and bent his head over the pool, and a thrill of joy passed through his beating heart when he gazed into her beautiful face. 'Beloved one! Light of the morning!' he cried in a passion of love. 'Come to me!' and clasping her hands he drew her gently out of the warm and dark water; and in the waning starlight (for the dawn was near) he pressed the beautiful maiden to his breast, and on his bosom she leaned like a wild bird at rest after a weary flight. 'Beautiful Hinemoa,' he cried, 'let us go! Come with me, beloved!' He then threw his mat around her and took her to his house, where they rested; and thenceforth, according to the ancient laws of the Maoris, they became man and wife.

"Now when the morning dawned, and the sun had risen and warmed the earth, the people of the village went out from their houses to cook and eat their breakfasts. But, behold! Tutanékai did not as usual appear from his house. The door remained closed, and the people, who were fond of Tutanékai, cried out, 'What does this mean, for he always comes to talk with us at this hour? Perhaps something has happened! Perhaps he has been drowned in the lake! Who will go and see?'

"Now there was an old auntie of Tutanékai who was passing by whilst the people were talking, and they said to her, 'You are his relation; why do you not go in and see what is the matter?' 'No,' said the old woman, 'I should be afraid.' But at last

they persuaded her; so she opened the door, and, looking in, cried out, 'Why! I see four legs!' and she then cried out again, 'It is Hinemoa! Hinemoa the beautiful and Tutanékai! I know her by her tattooed legs.' All the village people heard her with amazement, and shouted for joy, 'Hinemoa! The beautiful Hinemoa is in Tutanékai's *wharé!* She is his wife! She is now one of us!' And they were very glad, and all celebrated his marriage with great feasting and many *hakas* to do honour to the young couple.

"Tutanékai and Hinemoa to this day are not forgotten, lady. The Maoris are never tired of telling the story of the faithful lovers. They still show Hinemoa's Bath with great pride, and talk of the long swim across the lake to the arms of her beloved.

"And now," said Sophia, as she ended her tale, "that is all I have to tell about Tutanékai and Hinemoa. But, lady, is not love a beautiful thing, and good?"

"Yes, Sophia, it is indeed a beautiful thing," I replied, "and good when it is true."

Love is love—ever old, yet ever new, but always the same. Let us cling to it, for it is the only thing that endures.

CHAPTER IV.

A MAORI WEDDING.

LET us now turn from folk-lore to reality—from the hidden and mysterious past to a present-day Maori wedding,

Renati Keepa was the eldest son of the chief of the Tohurangi tribe, and grandson of Te Keepa of Whakarewarewa. Renati's bride, Manurau Wepiha, was the daughter of the chief of the Ngatiwhakaue tribe of the Te Puki district. Our cards of invitation gave 12 o'clock as the hour of the ceremony; so at 11.30 we started from Rotorua for the little Maori village of Ohinemutu, which is on the shores of Rotorua Lake. Here we found the open space before St. Faith's Church thronged with European and Maori visitors, the latter attired in all their brightest and best. The varied colours, flung about with a prodigal hand, made a brilliant scene quite Eastern in its glowing effects, and one that could scarcely fail to rejoice the eyes of an artist or, indeed, any lover of colour. But the hour was drawing near 12 o'clock; so we entered the church and took our places.

MAHUTA TE TOKO. [*To face p.* 48.

The long lancet-shape windows were thrown wide open, and we gazed upon a lovely scene. The blue lake shimmered peacefully in the warm sunshine, its green shores lighted here and there by the golden glory of the Australian wattle, now in the full wealth of its beauty. In the near distance, the long, graceful leaves of the New Zealand flax were gently stirred by the light breeze; whilst the soft, lazy croaking of the marsh frogs, blended with the hum of the honey-laden bees; the twitter of birds, and the chirping of crickets in the grass, seemed like nature's bridal hymn; and a calm of ineffable peace, born of its loveliness, enveloped the landscape, and steeped in the life-giving sunshine of the spring, lulled one to a deep sense of rest and peace.

But a prolonged and ever-increasing murmur of voices soon dispelled this enchanting day-dream, and indicated the approach of the bridal party, the procession being headed by the Maori clergyman, the Rev. F. A. Bennett, in full Anglican canonicals. Following him came the bride and bridegroom with their attendant bridesmaid and groomsman, and then the parents and other near relatives of the young couple. The appearance of these fine, well-set-up Maori men impressed us greatly; they were dressed in European clothes, whilst over their shoulders, much in the same fashion as the ancient Roman draped his toga, they wore the New Zealand mat made of kiwi feathers, from time immemorial the national garb of the race. Some of these mats were very handsome and most valuable, the best being made of the feathers of the kiwi; this singular bird

is wingless and tailless, with a peculiar round-shaped body, and an abnormally long bill. Other mats were woven of flax of natural colour, with long tags of black or brown worsted hanging at intervals all over the garment; others were of wool, also with hanging fringes, and brilliant in colour. The bridegroom also wore European clothes and a kiwi mat.

The bride was in white pongee silk, prettily made, and trimmed with narrow Valenciennes lace; her white shoes completed a very up-to-date and quite modern costume; and over all she wore the national kiwi feather mat. Her ornaments were a gold-mounted New Zealand greenstone (*Pomaré*) brooch, and round her neck a greenstone *Tiki*—the carved presentment of one of their ancient gods and said to be the New Zealand Adam. Her hair, which was very pretty, was a tawny brown, burnished here and there with a copper tint and twisted in a plait at the back of her head; and at one side were two Huia feathers from the much-prized Huia bird, supposed only to be worn by people of high rank. The bridesmaid was in Tussore silk, with a head-dress of Amokura feathers, and wore a mat—as also did the groomsman and the others of the wedding-party.

The service, beautifully conducted, was in the Maori language, though the form of marriage was after our own Prayer-book, and the first hymn, given whilst the wedding-procession moved up the aisle, was—"The Voice that breathed o'er Eden"—sung by the whole congregation. The effect of the service, as rendered in Maori, is soft in sound, but very monotonous, there being no great changes in the

inflection of the voice When the service was concluded the young couple, followed by their relatives, entered the vestry to sign the registers; and, as they passed down the aisle, the choir sang the beautiful Maori "Hymn of Welcome"—a lovely air with a haunting refrain.

The registers being duly signed, the party proceeded to the large carved *wharé*, a house used by the Maoris as a meeting-place, and called by them *Tama-te-kapua;* it is here they give their entertainments when the Haká* is danced. The building is constructed after the Maori fashion, the walls being decorated with carvings in wood, stained dark red, and strips of fine flax matting woven in various patterns. At the entrance the bride and bridegroom took up their position to receive the congratulations and good wishes of their friends, which were offered with a hearty shake of the hand. Inside, the wedding-breakfast was arranged, and the bridal gifts displayed.

Along the sides of this fine room were placed two long tables for the general guests; and at the end or top of the room was a separate table for the chief's family party and special friends. Nearly all the European guests had brought some pretty or useful offering, and these were laid out between the two long tables. Before the breakfast commenced everyone collected round this table to admire the gifts; and there really were some very pretty things. I noticed some greenstone jewellery set in gold, silver-mounted hair-brushes, photograph-frames, pictures

* The national dance of the country.

and lace, serviette-rings, fruit-dishes, and a china tea-service, butter and preserve-dishes, silver salt-cellars, a travelling-clock, flower-vases and lamps; and some good practical things in the shape of bank-cheques, with table and bed-linen.

At the bridal table, and immediately opposite the young couple, was the wedding-cake, made in three tiers, iced and decorated with white ornaments and orange blossom. The tables were brightened with vases of wattle bloom; and dishes of sweets, cakes, fruit and other dainties, were tastefully arranged down the centres of the white damask cloths. We were waited on by young Maori *wahines* (girls) in European dress. These girls were most quick and courteous in their attendance; and waited quite as well as their European sisters would have done.

The meat dishes were various and included the muttonbird, considered by the Maoris a great delicacy, and imported by them expressly for the occasion. I tasted the dish, and frankly confess I did not like it; the rank fisby taste was so strong. I suppose my palate had not been educated to the peculiar flavour! so I asked one pretty *wahine* to substitute for it something a little less pronounced; she smiled, and showing her pearly white teeth, said with a merry laugh: "You not like it? then I bring something else." Pudding and lighter sweets with dessert followed, and so brought the menu to a close. Lemonade and aerated waters of various kinds supplied the place of alcohol, and in these we drank the toasts that were subsequently proposed.

The clergyman, in a very appropriate speech,

gave the health of the young Chief and Chieftainess, wishing them a happy and prosperous life. Renati Keepa, he said, was likely to become in a few years a leader of the Tohurangi tribe, and that having known him personally for some time, he felt confident that he possessed those qualifications which constitute a leader of men. In the recent football match, Maoris *v.* New South Wales, Renati had played back, and needless to say, acquitted himself well. In conclusion, the speaker hoped that when Renati was confronted with many problems that would arise for the welfare of his people, he would succeed in landing many a goal. The bridegroom then, in a few words, thanked his friends for the kind feeling they had evinced in so warmly responding to the toast.

The Chaplain of Rotorua, in proposing the health of "Our Hosts," the Tohurangi and Ngatiwhakaue tribes, said his remarks must be brief, but he felt sure he was voicing the feelings of all the Europeans present when he said that they had all felt highly honoured by the invitations sent to them to be present at this marriage ceremony. A high ideal of marriage was one of the crowning points of civilisation, and he wanted the Maoris to feel that the Europeans were one with them in seeking to attain this highest ideal. They desired to show their appreciation of the overflowing hospitality they had enjoyed that day, and the fullest Christian sympathy with their Maori brethren, by now drinking to the health of their hosts—the Tohurangi and Ngatiwhakaue. This was acknowledged by one of the chiefs of

Whakarewarewa, Maika Keepa, father of the bridegroom, who said it pleased his people greatly to see so many *pakehas* present, who were all exceedingly welcome. He was very grateful to them for their presence, and hoped it would still further tend to make them dwell in unity.

Mr. Bennett then thanked the *pakehas* (the Europeans) for their assistance and support. He was certain that a gathering of this description would do a tremendous amount of good in more ways than one, and felt grateful to their visitors for the hearty manner in which they had responded to the invitation. The Maoris, one and all, felt honoured. He had often told the natives that the better class of *pakeha* was quite prepared to come and rub noses* (figuratively) with the better class of Maori, and to offer his hand to help his Maori brother a little higher up the ladder of Christian civilisation. A gathering of this description proved to the Maori the truth of the assertion which he had made. Many opportunities would present themselves when the Maori would be glad to grasp the hand of his *pakeha* brother, to climb the ladder to a higher standard. The Maori was anxious to progress, and, personally, he felt quite optimistic as to the capacity of the Maori for progress in everything that concerned his highest interests. He hoped that the interests of their visitors would not end with this gathering. There were many questions affecting the social and moral welfare of the Maoris that required careful

* The hongi, or rubbing together of noses, is the Maori form of friendly salutation, and obtains to this day amongst themselves.

consideration. He hoped that those present would do all in their power in solving these problems. Further opportunities would be given for the two races to meet together. He hoped that when the Young Maori Party Conference met here in January, the gathering would be just as enthusiastic and harmonious as it had been on this occasion. In conclusion, he again thanked all the visitors for the honour of their presence, and wished them all, "Kia Ora."

So ended a most interesting ceremony; and, with the concluding speeches of the two clergymen, much grave matter was left in the minds of the thoughtful spectators for deep consideration. The first being, the future of this mysterious people that so suddenly appeared in their canoes from an unknown country; for to the present day they have no knowledge of their own history, or where they came from previous to landing in New Zealand, which they called *Aotearoa*. Beyond this fact, and only from that date, have they any record of their existence as a nation. They are now in our hands either to make or mar; let us continue to stretch out the hand of friendship, and bind them to the mother-country with links of affection and respect, that will be stronger than fetters of steel.

We are beginning, in these days of universal national unrest and jealous ambitions, to feel the vital necessity of brotherhood and federation. Mr. Chamberlain, in his notable speech at Birmingham,* stated "that the federation of free nations which he

* July 9, 1906.

could foresee, would enable them to prolong into the ages yet to come all the glorious traditions of the British race. What must they do to achieve this ideal? Cultivate the affections and sympathy of the colonies." To every thinking person this would appear to be the right and only course, and to those who have travelled much, and talked freely with all classes in the colonies, it is to be noted that, irrespective of race and colour, the general and deep feeling is anxiety not to be left out in the cold, and the wish that the mother-country should think as kindly of her younger children as of the elder.

The mighty Empire, on which the sun never sets, is composed of such a vast concourse of diverse races, religions, languages and nationalities that a common centre of interest should bind all together in one indivisible whole; and that centre of interest is Britain our mother, whose kindly and protecting wings have ever sheltered her callow brood till they reach maturity. Then let it be—shoulder to shoulder, hand firmly clasped in hand, one in this common bond of unity, all races, creeds, and colours under one flag, and one ruler; strengthened and made one by the freemasonry of true and faithful brotherhood. So let the march of time pass on, leaving us free to face the future without fear—in unity—and blameless.

CHAPTER V.

THE RAINBOW TROUT.

During our stay in Auckland we had a very kind invitation from the late Mr. Nathan to spend the day at his country place and visit his ostrich farm at Whitchurch. We had a pleasant drive of some miles into the district, and after lunch walked to the farm which was close by.

The flock of ostriches were about 700 in number; they were all shut off in different paddocks, and classed according to age and other qualifications; for instance, I heard the manager asked by one of the party where the two dangerous and very savage birds were? "They are all right," was the reply. "I shut them up safely in the far paddock; we will just walk through this flock of young ones." He opened a gate and we found ourselves in a large grass field, where there were a great number of birds; when they saw us coming in they walked up in a most friendly way, taking a good look at us as we strolled across the paddock. I was moving along slowly asking questions about the birds, and thinking one of our party was on my right I turned to make a remark, when great was my surprise at finding

instead of a friend a large ostrich stalking by my side, and keeping quite close to me, whilst he watched me with a pair of large and very bright eyes, dark brown in colour and full of intelligence. The manager seemed to think the bird had taken a fancy to my gold-topped sunshade, and it was the shining handle that interested him so much. The birds were not in the least shy, and escorted us to the gate at the far end of the field; when we got into the road they slowly turned away, looking as if they thought they had done all that politeness demanded. It was a strange sight to see so great a number of these large birds in a semi-tame state, far away from their free and limitless home in the golden sandy deserts of burning Africa.

After leaving the paddocks we went to the factory, and the whole process of preparing the feathers was explained to us. When the feathers are considered sufficiently grown and fully matured, a certain number of the ostriches are driven in, and a bird is placed in a small kind of box that comes up to about the shoulder, or joint of the wing; the box being shaped somewhat like a miniature horse-box, such as is used for shipping horses and slinging them into the hold of a vessel. When the bird is shut in, they raise the wing over the side of the box and it is held, whilst the plumes are cut off with a pair of clippers, leaving about a couple of inches of the quill, which the bird sheds naturally later on. This clipping of the feathers is a much better and more humane method than the old and barbarous one of pulling them out. Finally we saw the various pro-

WHEATFIELDS. [To face p. 58.

cesses of dressing and preparing the feathers by dyeing and bleaching before being made up in boxes ready for sale. There were white cardboard boxes full of feathers, of all sizes, in black, white and natural colours ; one superb white boa was specially admired.

The city of Auckland possesses several fine parks. Albert Park, which stands on rising ground overlooking the town, affords a very pretty view of the harbour, with the Hauraki Gulf and the Island of Rangitoto in the distance ; the gardens are laid out with bedding plants, and there is some nice statuary ; notably a bronze figure of Queen Victoria, who was much beloved by the Maoris, and called by them "Kuini-Wickitoria." It is placed on a handsome pedestal of red Aberdeen granite, and occupies a commanding position in the centre of the gardens. There are also two white marble statues, one emblematic of Peace, holding a dove to her heart and a sheathed sword in her right hand; these were purchased by the executors of the late Miss Helen Boyd, who bequeathed a sum of money for the purpose. There are also two white marble monuments, one erected to the memory of an officer, and the other to the officers and men who fell in South Africa. The two other parks are the Domain, which is an extensive piece of ground where the troops camp out during the drill season ; and Cornwall Park, from which there is a fine view, and was a present to the town by a generous citizen.

Auckland has many well-organised institutions ; one I must particularly mention, as it concerns the

Maoris, and that is the Maori Girls' School at Parnell. This school is dedicated to the memory of our late Queen, and Mrs. Neligan, the wife of the present Bishop of Auckland, takes a most kind interest in the institution. With her permission I went over the school, and was delighted at the practical method of instruction; not only are the girls thoroughly well taught as regards book-learning, but with this is combined needlework and housekeeping, cooking, washing, cleaning, and the like. All this is to fit them to become good and useful wives to the rising generation of Maoris. No servants are kept at the school, which is entirely worked by the girls; it is exquisitely clean, and thoroughly well managed, so that every girl leaving the school at the end of her training goes away with a thorough knowledge of the rudiments of household management to supplement her literary education. I was very pleased with my visit, and before I left the girls were assembled in the large schoolroom and sang some hymns to the accompaniment of an harmonium. The majority had fine contralto voices, and they seemed thoroughly to enjoy their singing. The lady superintendent was anxious I should stay and have tea with the girls, but I could not do so, as we were leaving Auckland the next day and pressed for time.

Another institution which is well attended and prospering supplies a great need in the province; it is the Diocesan School founded by the present Bishop, for which the people of Auckland are sincerely grateful. It is bearing good fruit for

knowledge and discipline in the moral training of the young, which is sadly needed. I noticed amongst the youth of both sexes in New Zealand a strong spirit of selfishness and sturdy defiance, a determination to have their own way at any cost, combined with a complete disregard of the wishes and counsels of their elders. Clergy and laymen of the highest position have commented severely from the pulpit and in the columns of the newspapers on the subject; and many have been the warnings up to recent date that have come from honoured lips; warnings that must not be disregarded, for if steps are not speedily taken to remedy the rapidly growing evil of unbridled license in the rising generation, it will have far-reaching and most disastrous consequences, which might develop hereafter into a serious national calamity. The blame, I think, lies with the parents, who are either too foolishly fond, or too indolent, and perhaps too busy, to correct their children, who are thus handed over to the sport of their own ungoverned caprices.

When in Rotorua I had a discussion with an American lady who had taken up the religious education question in the United States, and had lectured on the subject. She was entirely in favour of its exclusion from the schools, and placed her ideas very clearly before me, but with these I could not agree, and gave my reasons for dissent. I may perhaps be pardoned if I reproduce them here. "Surely," I said, "you would not desire our young people to be brought up without any religious knowledge albeit of the most rudimentary kind, and leave

even this to chance, as it would assuredly become in the long run? Surely it is better to make religious instruction compulsory in some well organised form, and then you will not have to face the danger of eliminating it from the schools. It is a terrible responsibility to incur, that of bringing up our young without any religious training, to admit the possibility of a child in after years turning on its parents with the bitter reproach, 'I might not have been what I now am had I received some religious instruction.' Every child has a right to receive some religious instruction, and if in maturer years the child elects to stray from its teachings the onus rests with itself. The question is more than one of mere education; it is certain that moral integrity, as inspired by the knowledge of God, is the very root and mainspring of our individual and national existence; and another thing is also quite as certain, that a godless nation cannot, will not, prosper."

On my second visit to Auckland I again returned to the enchanted region of Rotorua. One of the finest views, I think, amongst the many I saw in the district, is that from the Pukeroa recreation ground; from here you can see the whole of the Rotorua basin (80,000 acres); you look across the placid waters of the lovely Rotorua Lake to Mokoia Island, once the home of Hinemoa and Tutanékai, the story of whose romantic love is so dear to the heart of the Maori. You see the steam rising in white columns from Tikitiri, that grim Dantesque abode of horrors, and the mountain top of dark Wahunga frowning from the Tarawera Range,

striking the eye of the spectator as it towers aloft in all its dark and gloomy dignity. It is on this mountain that Sophia, the Tarawera guide, told me so many of her people are buried—a fit resting-place for that mysterious race—and away through a break in the Hano gorge the rich blue of the Paeroa Range bounds the extensive view, whilst in the west, sturdy Paparata stands as a sentinel with a skyline of forest trees, like a regiment of loyal soldiers guarding its extended line. At the north-west lies Ngongotaha, which raises its head 1,600 feet above the Rotorua Lake; this mountain, the experts say, is next in the direct line of probable volcanic disturbance from Tarawera, whose terrific eruption in 1886 destroyed those wonders of the world, the Pink and White Terraces.

On a clear day I have seen from Ngongotaha as far as the Bay of Plenty on the East coast, White Island with its cap of smoke spreading out like a mushroom, whilst inland soared the giant tops of Ruapeho and Tongariro, a complete vision, most truly fair, that strikes a chord in the heart at unison with the far-reaching beauty of the scene.

I think the majority of people in recalling past happy days will associate them with nature, who, true to her children, never turns an unwilling ear when sought by those who love her. You do not find her in the busy town amid the hum and stress of life, that cruelly overwhelming life where a man has not time even to know himself, much less his fellow-creatures. But in her own kingdom you will find her in the free pure air, beneath the sun and

sky, the green trees, the waving grass. With rod or gun, with faithful horse or dog, a comrade here or there, and all the world alive with beauty. Many such happy hours do I remember when, rod in hand, I started for a day's fishing on the lovely Lake of Rotorua, with its blue and tranquil depths, the peaceful outline of its wooded shores, with land, sky, and water one glowing harmony of colour. The excitement of the sport makes the blood bound through the veins, the pulses throb with a stronger beat, the eyes brighten with interest, and life circulates with increased rapidity. Then the sparkling wine cup of existence is raised to the lips, and we drink in the glorious life-renewing draught, feeling it is indeed good to live. I think that amongst all the countless denizens peopling the ocean and fresh waters of the earth, nothing can exceed the rainbow trout in beauty, and for those who have never seen it I will endeavour to give a description, though I shall fail in conveying any but a faint idea of its radiant colouring.

The upper part of the back is of a transparent green aquamarine hue, dotted with warm red-brown spots; the green then merges into silver—molten dazzling silver, which before life becomes extinct gleams all over with the changing iridescence of the rainbow. But nature with unstinted hand, deeming her bounteous gift of beauty all insufficient, added a band of most vivid rose-colour, running like a ribbon from head to tail, whilst on the gills she placed the semblance of a brilliant rose petal; thus completing a great masterpiece. The flesh of these

TROUT FISHING. [*To face p.* 64.

radiant creatures in flavour resembles salmon trout, it is bright coral pink in colour and is most delicious. I have tasted many I thought quite equal even to salmon when fresh out of the water.

The engineer of the good boat *Hinemoa* was an expert at broiling trout. About half an hour before lunch he would take a fish, and preparing it, would wrap it in paper, and putting it between two sheets of tin would lay the primitive dish in the ashes to bake, and when ready after the simple cooking, it was, when eaten with cucumber sandwiches, perfectly delicious, a feast fit for Lucullus. I complimented our kind friend, who replied, "Yes, there are worse things than a broiled rainbow trout fresh out of the water, with hunger as a sauce!"

But the rods are ready and baited with golden Devon or glittering spoon bait: we pay out the line, and the boat moves gently along, but like the war horse that sniffs the breeze of battle from afar the fisherman prepares himself for the fight; the rod is held with a firmer grip, as a little tug is felt, and then comes a fierce pull. "Fish, fish!" we shout; the vessel slows down and stops; everyone reels in his line with hot haste, whilst that of the lucky fisherman whirrs round with a sharp clicking sound, and the fish makes off with a rush. Then again the fisherman reels in; then another wild dash for liberty by the bravely fighting fish; a longer length of line runs out, and the startled creature in his efforts to get free leaps into the air, a brilliant gleam of silver flashing in the sunlight. After a series of magnificent bounds into the air the dazzling and

terrified captive drops into the water; and thus the battle goes on, till becoming exhausted, he makes less resistance, the rushes become less frequent, till at last he allows himself to be drawn near the side of the boat, when the fisherman standing on the seat can direct his movements, playing him backwards and forwards till he is sufficiently close. The gaff is then brought out and the living jewel safely landed.

A very pretty spot close to the Rotorua Lake is the Fairy Pool, which lies just off the main road and is reached by a narrow footpath: a Maori has charge of the ground and takes a small toll from each visitor as they enter. You skirt a shallow stream of water edged with willows, shrubs and grasses, till you reach a circular pool which is one of the favourite spawning grounds of rainbow trout. This pool communicates with the lake by a large drain which runs underneath the road, and here the fish find their way every season, as the pool is quiet and secluded. They are very tame and allow themselves to be touched and stroked, and when the spawning is over they return to the lake, and later on the small fry also seek the deeper waters as soon as they are able to swim off. It is a curious sight to watch the fish, of which the pool is quite full, as they lazily move, seeking the cool shadows thrown by the willows over the clear green water and snapping occasionally at an insect as it settles on the surface.

I have often thought it is not surprising that this erst untutored race, the Maoris, living as they do in the midst of such a beautiful country, should possess

many lovely and most poetical legends. Here is one the Maoris tell their children of the Heaven and Earth.*

At the beginning of the world Heaven and Earth were married, but they were separated by their children, the Winds. Up to this time they have remained separated, yet their mutual love still continues. The soft, warm sighs of her loving bosom still ever rise up to him, ascending to him from the woody mountains and valleys; and men call these mists. And the vast Heaven, as he mourns through the long nights his separation from his beloved, drops frequent tears upon her bosom; and men, seeing these, call them dewdrops.

Among the many delightful spots in the neighbourhood is the famous fresh-water spring of Hamurana. It lies on the north-east shore of Lake Rotorua, and can easily be reached by road (or steamer across the lake); on leaving the steamer small rowing boats take the party up the stream to the head of the great spring; here a large volume of the clearest blue water, icy cold even on the hottest day, wells up with tremendous force from a circular chasm in the ground; the force and buoyancy of the water is so great nothing can sink. We threw in some copper coins; they sank but a very short distance and then flew to the sides of the well and stuck there in the soft mud, from which the Maoris later on used to remove them. The water is so intensely cold that it is impossible to bear the arm in it if immersed for even one minute. Thousands of gallons are discharged from this unfailing reservoir during the twenty-four hours, and the endlees supply

* See 'Polynesian Mythology,' by Sir George Grey.

never varies. It is beautiful when in the boat to gaze down into its blue unfathomable depths. Graceful willows droop their long branches over the stream as it runs into the lake, and with these are cherry trees that bear most delicious fruit in the season, which is offered to the visitors for sale by the Maoris.

The inland lakes of New Zealand are like those in other parts of the world, subject to sudden caprices and puffs of wind, with storms that get up in the course of a few minutes that are very dangerous. I remember an incident that occurred on Rotorua Lake, which might have ended in a tragedy, though happily it was otherwise. Three friends of ours were trolling in a small yacht when a sudden squall set in, and the owner had just time to shout, "Look out, boys!" when the little craft heeled over and they were precipitated into the water. Out of the three men one was an expert swimmer, the second could swim enough to keep himself afloat, but the third could not swim at all. This poor fellow sank once, but on coming again to the surface, quietly remarked: "I cannot swim," so he was promptly seized, and they all managed to keep up, till some Maoris came to their rescue after they had been twenty-five minutes in the water.

We had arranged for an afternoon's fishing that day, and on getting to the wharf, one of the agents said our friend had telephoned to ask if we would wait and take his party to the scene of the capsize, as ours was the only boat available, all the others having gone out much earlier in the day; and there

was, he said, a good deal of valuable property in the way of rods and fishing-tackle that they were anxious to recover. Of course we were only too glad to give any help in our power. So we waited, and picking up the three shipwrecked mariners, we took their little boat in tow, and proceeded to the scene of the disaster.

We found the pretty yacht lying on the surface of the water like a wounded and helpless bird with its white sails extended like wings. The best swimmer of the party then boarded our boat: he was equipped in an extemporised diving-suit, which was blue and white striped sleeping flannels, so as we neared the little craft he dived overboard and an exciting scene commenced, that of fixing ropes to the boat to tow her along. Whilst this was going on, and the captain of the *Hinemoa* was shouting orders alternately to the engineer in our boat, and to our friend in the water who was bending on the ropes, we ladies were preparing hot tea and other comforts in the shape of whisky and soda for the shipwrecked ones. There were some jokes made at the expense of the Humane Society's medal, to which we all said we should lay claim, whilst some frivolous person suggested that first aid to the drowned would be the administration of whisky minus the water, as of that they probably had had sufficient.

At last we got the little boat under weigh, and towed her into shallow water, where the owner and his friends righted her, and then having done all we could we left them quite happy baling

vigorously. So things did not end so badly, though some of the fishing tackle was not recovered, and one of our friends had rather a bad time subsequently with a poisoned foot which had been cut. However "all's well that ends well," and I am sure everybody quite enjoyed the boat salvage expedition of that lovely summer's day on Lake Rotorua.

SOPHIA'S WHARÉ, WAIROA. [*To face p.* 70.

(*From a Photograph by R. Seldon, Rotorua.*)

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT WAIMUNGU GEYSER.

The excursions round the district, taking Rotorua as a centre, are very numerous; all are deeply interesting, each with its own distinctive beauty, and weeks may be spent in touring round by motor or coach.

One of the prettiest excursions is to the buried village of Wairoa, about nine miles from Rotorua, and formerly the scene of the great volcanic eruption of 1886. In going through the bush we had been passing some very large trees, and the driver showed us one that had the bleached skull of a horse firmly wedged between its upper branches, at a great height from the ground. It looked so strange grinning down at us from its airy perch, as if meditating on the days when it tramped the road as its brothers were then doing. The driver said he had seen it in that position for many years, but when or how it got there, no one seemed to know. The road continued to pass through the bush, and fine specimens of the forest trees of New Zealand were to be seen, with flowering shrubs and creepers, of which the Rata is one of the largest.

On leaving the bush and nearing Wairoa, the driver pulled up on a little rise in the road where a curious thing is seen; two lakes quite close to each other, separated by some hilly ground, the one, Lake Rotokakahi, being bright green, and the other, Tikitapu, turquoise blue. The colour of the latter is quite unlike anything I have seen elsewhere. The blue grotto at Capri in Italy is pure cobalt, and the shades of the Mediterranean vary from the palest blue to the deepest indigo, whilst ocean, lake and river in many parts of the world I have visited, ring changes on the mystic colour. But I have never seen another Tikitapu; it is liquid turquoise of the most perfect hue, probably the result of the admixture of white pumice which is washed out from the side of the mountain.

Leaving the lakes we soon reached Wairoa, a most romantic spot, where the ruins of the little church, the mission house, and McCraes Hotel are visible. Outside the hotel premises are still to be seen bits of the furniture, iron bedsteads and grates, sad relics of the overwhelming disaster that destroyed the little village twenty years ago. The framework of Sophia's *wharé* is also standing. Across the empty threshold drooped an exquisite spray of pink wild rose, the lovely guardian of that shattered home, placed there by nature as if in repentant sorrow for the savage mood that once had wrecked that lovely spot, and turned its beauty into desolation.

Having made the tour of these historic places, we went to see the waterfall, and descending by a steep and rough pathway, we found ourselves at the

BOILING LAKE, ROTOMAHANA. [*To face p.* 72.

foot of the cascade. I was told that it was not nearly as beautiful as before the eruption, which had destroyed all the vegetation at the sides of the fall, and left it quite bare; indeed it is only of more recent years that bushes and undergrowth have appeared. I was fortunate in buying a fine photograph of the fall taken before the eruption, and certainly as it appears to-day the fall has lost much of its luxuriant beauty, while the volume of water, compared with the photographic representation is considerably less. Returning from the fall we adjourned to Mrs. Rennie's tea house, and after enjoying an excellent cup of tea and resting awhile we started on our drive home, having spent a very pleasant day amid so many volcanic surroundings.

The most interesting, though quite the most tiring expedition, is to the site of the old Pink and White Terraces on Rotomahana Lake. We started early one morning, driving by coach to Wairoa, and on arriving walked down to the edge of Tarawera Lake, and found an oil launch waiting for us, so we stepped on board and were soon under weigh. The shores of the lake, as we passed, looked bare and dreary enough, their uniform colour a dull grey, and with little vegetation beyond some stunted bushes and tufts of Toi toi grass, to relieve the sad monotony of the landscape. As we progressed up the lake, the bleak and barren cliffs rose in height till we reached the foot of gloomy Tarawera; here a deathlike silence broods over the grim desolation of the spot where the Maori villages lie buried, entombed with their hapless inhabitants. Landing at the foot of

the mountain, we began the ascent of a valley or watercourse which lies between the two lakes. Wending our way slowly through the boulders of rock, we found the ground covered with pumice and ashes, making walking very disagreeable. At last we reached the top, where there was a level surface; here the Maori guide called a halt and suggested lunch, asking if he should unpack the baskets. This he did most skilfully, and when he had marshalled and surveyed the contents he made the vexing announcement that there were no cups and saucers. The milk, tea, sugar, cold water and billy were all there, but alas! no cups or even tumblers. As we were all very thirsty after our hot walk, the omission was a serious one. The guide shook his head, and remarked, "I should say the girl that packed that basket must be in love." "Perhaps you may be right," I replied, "and to punish her when we get back, I will tell her what you say! But never mind, and as necessity is the mother of invention, we can drink out of the cover of the billy." At this brilliant suggestion everyone laughed, good humour was restored, and the lunch thoroughly enjoyed.

The spot at which we had halted was immediately over the notorious cinder path, a very steep descent leading down to the shores of Rotomahana Lake. Our spirits sank to zero when we saw what was before us; but the guide who had taken me under his special protection, said, "I was to leave it all to him and he would undertake to get me down in safety. Now lean all your weight on my shoulder, I am accustomed to taking people up and

THE WHITE TERRACES. [*To face p.* 74.

(*From a Photograph by Josiah Martin, Auckland.*)

down every day." I was so dismayed at the appearance of the track, that had I been ordered to walk on my head I should have tried to do so. The guide then started, and with the first step we plunged over our ankles into cinders and grit. In a few moments we had to stop for my shoes were full, and had to be taken off and shaken; we then went on like the pilgrims of old, each step more painful than the last, the path becoming so steep that sometimes we had great difficulty in stopping ourselves from running, and could only do so by planting our feet deeply into the cinders, for I felt as if we must rush headlong into the lake. However, no such catastrophe occurred, and after again stopping two or three times to shake the stones out of our shoes, we found ourselves, to our intense relief, on the shores of the Lake Rotomahana, where another oil launch was waiting to take us on.

As we passed up the lake, the scene was weird and desolate in the extreme; bleak and barren cliffs varying in height, but of one dull monotonous grey, chilled and depressed us as we glided by, whilst Tongariro with its 6,458 feet of gloomy grandeur frowned forbiddingly over our heads, as if it would fain bury us with the vanished terraces beneath the sullen waters of the sad lake that lay at its feet; and so on we went till we reached the head of the lake, where we disembarked, and, climbing up a steep bank, found ourselves gazing down into a very inferno.

The ground was broken up, here a boiling cascade, there a porridge pot that looked as if some

"Deil's broth was cooking," the whole area one seething mass, made more hideous still by the horrible stench that ascended towards us, with the clouds of steam disgorged by the boiling pools and liquid mud basins. It was a sight indeed "to give us pause" and teach us how limited is the power of man when brought face to face with the dread forces of nature.

Descending the slope we got into the launch and proceeded in the direction of the boiling lake which is a portion of Rotomahana, where some boiling springs break out beneath the surface, and so hot is it, that the guide cautioned us not to immerse our hands in the water for fear of being scalded. We were told that burns caused by this chemical water are very much slower in healing than those caused by fresh water of the same temperature.

It was an odd sensation to know that the water beneath our little launch was boiling, and the experience was a strange one. We then returned by the way we came, and after reascending the redoubtable cinder path, we walked down the rocky valley, and taking the Tarawera launch soon found ourselves at Wairoa, where a nine mile drive by the road we had taken in coming landed us safely at Bathgate House, tired, but full of wonder at the marvels we had seen.

Another interesting excursion is to Waiotapu, which is about eighteen miles from Rotorua; the country all along this route shows unmistakable signs of violent seismic disturbance. One large tract of ground which seemed to have sunk lower

MUD VOLCANO, WAIOTAPU.

[*To face p.* 76.

than the level of the surrounding land is called earthquake flat, as it suddenly sank during the eruption of Tarawera in 1886, and a yawning chasm or crack also opened, that extends for miles through the country.

We found the cosy little hotel very prettily situated, and I secured a room at the end of the verandah, detached from the main part of the hotel and commanding a fine view of the beautiful Rainbow Mountain, so called from the brilliant pink and red colouring of the earth and rocks. The whole of the mountain was smoking, or I should say steaming. Up to the present date no active energy has manifested itself on the side facing Waiotapu, but on the other side lies the valley containing the basin of the great Waimungu Geyser, one of the wonders of the world.

I mentioned that on arriving at Waiotapu I had secured a room facing Rainbow Mountain, and it was over the top of this mountain that I used to see the steam ascending from mighty Waimungu after one of the big eruptions. We had had some cold and uncertain weather for a few days, when there was suddenly a change for the better, and seeing this, the landlord advised our starting at once for our visit to the geyser.

In an hour our preparations were completed. We took some rugs and a box of provisions, as we intended sleeping at the shelter tents in case the geyser did not play. A light wagonette and a pair of wiry horses came round in charge of the old Maori driver John, and we started about 10.30 A.M. We

drove nine miles, ascending gradually along a soft road, clay at times alternating with sand, and edged by bracken fern and Manuka scrub, from which there was but little variety on the route. Indeed, the only variation to the monotony was afforded by John, who was the proud possessor of a whip that had a very long lash; after cracking it with great energy it had an unfortunate trick of either catching in the harness or curling itself round the axle of the wheel, when the old man would suddenly make a dive and almost disappear off the driving box in his frantic efforts to disentangle it. This occurred frequently, and on each occasion a good-natured member of the party jumped down and came to the rescue, so we suggested shortening up the lash much to John's disgust, for we were told he rather fancied the long lash and thought it was like driving four-in-hand. We skirted Rainbow Mountain with its bright colouring, every shade of red, pink and yellow being visible on its sides, and after many sharp turns and windings of the road, reached a little grassy plateau from which we obtained an extensive view of the surrounding hills, the geyser basin and the steaming valley.

Just below the plateau the little camp was to be seen, consisting of two or three tents belonging to the caretaker and the guide, who welcomed us on our arrival.

Before proceeding on our exploring trip, the guide suggested our having a little lunch, and this we partook of under the most primitive conditions. The so-called tent was some canvas stretched over a

GIBRALTAR ROCK, WAIMUNGU GEYSER. [*To face p.* 78.

frame of wooden laths. The floor was of mud well beaten down and made smooth. The table a deal board on trestles, and the fireplace an open hearth on which some logs were burning whilst a brick chimney carried away the smoke. A small rug made of strips of cloth, such as one sees in the cottages at home, was spread in front of the fireplace; the caretaker's wife did the honours, most kindly offering me her own seat, a cosy wicker arm-chair with a red cushion, the rest of the party contenting themselves with the wooden forms. It was a funny sight—the mud floor and benches, the open hearth with its blazing logs, over which a huge iron kettle was boiling; the rug which was amicably shared by the caretaker's baby and our dear old pointer Shot; I, installed in the seat of honour at the right of the fireplace, and old John at the left, who was warming his cold feet at the fire encased in a pair of grey woollen socks, having taken off his boots without any ceremony; and the caretaker in his working clothes, with long jack boots and minus his coat, formed a strange group at that homely fireside. I could not help thinking how amused our friends would be could they have looked in upon us and beheld the surroundings.

Our rest being over, we started on our exploring trip, first taking another look at the interesting bird's-eye view before starting on foot for the geyser valley. The path sloped gradually downwards, and was composed of soft dark grey rather gritty earth, which was breaking away from the sides of the hills in water-worn channels; with here and there a stunted

green bush or a bunch of long wiry grass, called *toi-toi*, with its graceful plumed head, to break the monotony and grim desolation of the scene. We soon reached the narrow sandy valley, which was covered many feet deep by volcanic ash. A stream of boiling water, the overflow from the geyser, ran through the valley, and crossing over by stepping stones we found ourselves on what was apparently a thin crust of crumbling gritty substance, through which boiling water was coming up bubbling and hissing with great energy. The crust covered a large area, and from the peculiar fizzing noise it makes is called the "Devil's Frying Pan." It seemed a terribly dangerous place, but things became more unpleasant as we advanced and heard the great blow-holes at the base of a beautiful and very precipitous rock called Gibraltar, from its resemblance to the Mediterranean fortress. The surface of the rock was streaked with brilliant patches of red and yellow colouring, and from the apertures steam was rushing out with a fearful and deafening roar, as if from the valves of a dozen locomotives.

The noise was deafening, but we were able to approach quite close, as the wind was driving the steam away from us. The volume, force and velocity of these jets was terrific; and the guide told us never varied. Year in, year out, from morn to night and night to morn, the ceaseless energy never abated; but it did seem a pity it should all be wasted when the supply seemed unlimited. Leaving nature's workshop where all the invisible artificers seemed to be working at high pressure rate, we proceeded to a

place nearer the geyser, and were soon enveloped in clouds of steam impregnated with many unfamiliar and unpleasant odours. So dense was the vapour that we could not see where we were walking to, and the heat we found most disagreeably scorching to our faces, whilst the ground was very hot to the soles of our feet, and the boiling steam with its horrid odour seemed to penetrate our clothes. As the position was, we thought, becoming rather risky, we called to the guide and said we wished to turn back. "Yes," he replied very calmly, "I think it is nearly time to do so." We therefore beat a hasty retreat, and, recrossing the boiling stream, walked up the slope to the geyser basin and looked into its shadowy depths. The water had a milky-white appearance, and steam was coming up in dense volumes from the centre of the basin, whilst on the outer sides it was rolling like clouds over the surface.

Leaving the geyser, we climbed up a steep cliff on the opposite side facing the blow-holes; and from the summit of this looked straight down into the geyser pool, which was circular in shape; it was, even in its quiescent state, a fine sight of mysterious dreary desolation, for the steam that swayed incessantly over the surface made one think there were horrors which it possibly might conceal. We waited about an hour and a half, hoping the geyser would play, but as it gave no signs of activity, and it was getting late, we started on the return journey, reaching the camp after sunset. As the geyser had not played since the previous day, and not to its greatest height for some days past, the guide said there was every

probability of a grand display later on, and, in the event of an eruption, the moon being full, the sight would be very fine; so we wrapped ourselves in our rugs, quite ready to leave the tents at a moment's notice.

As I had a small tent on the plateau above the others, I asked the guide to call out when there was any sign of the geyser playing up. "Certainly," he replied with a smile. I wondered at the time why he smiled, but subsequently understood, for he meant we should not require much rousing when once the geyser began to play. But sleep soon claimed her willing subject, and I drifted away into the land of dreams, but amidst my wanderings I became conscious of a strange sound, and I remember listening and trying to think what it could be—it seemed so far away. The noise commenced with a low rumbling, and as it increased consciousness returned, and in a moment I was alert, and, springing up, I cried, "It is the geyser," and, throwing open the canvas fly of the tent, I looked out upon the beauty of the moon-steeped night. It was ten minutes past 10 P.M., the atmosphere was perfectly clear, the night still and calm; not a sound or flutter in the air disturbed the magic of the scene. Over the pool shone the full and brilliant moon, showing all objects as clear as day; nothing indicated the awful transformation that was soon to follow. The low, far-off rumbling had increased to a hoarse roar and a bellowing as if of herds of wild cattle, the noise ever steadily increasing, growing in awful volume till the final crescendo was reached, when, with a

rending crash, a vast body of black mud, stones and boiling water hurled itself wildly upwards to the sky and, tearing the surface of the peaceful lake, shot five or six hundred feet into the air; the steam that enveloped it ascending about nine hundred or one thousand feet far above the tops of the surrounding hills.

The wild chaos of deafening sounds is quite indescribable, for the awful roaring was accompanied by the grinding and crashing of the stones and boulders that were thrown up and collided with each other as they fell. The centre of the column looked quite black, but the edges were shrouded in billows of feathery steam, on which the moon shed a pearly light that was infinitely tender though so brilliant. It seemed to my startled gaze as if the whole pool had leaped from its basin in mad career through the silvery radiance of the night. The scene was as light as day, and a picture of unsurpassed grandeur, of incomparable beauty.

The next morning, soon after 8 o'clock, fortune still further favoured us, for we saw another magnificent eruption. Without any warning, the geyser shot up with a terrific roar and, before attaining its greatest height, branched out like a gigantic spray of black coral, and, spreading through the soft, white steam-clouds, rose many hundred feet and soared triumphantly into the cool freshness of the early morning air. The Waimungu Geyser, when in its greatest state of activity and the maximum of its strength, was a sight to thrill even the most *blasé* and world-weary of travellers; a sight that brings

man face to face with his own nothingness when compared with the stupendous forces of nature, and to see it as I did, in the solitude and mystery of night, and in the bright awakening of morning, is a recollection that will last as long as memory remains.

Since my visit the Waimungu Geyser has stopped playing. Experts think it is due to the lowering of the Tarawera Lake, which burst one of its banks, causing a large cataract of water to pour into the valley, swamping the low lands and destroying the cultivation. The water ran for ten days, and when the fall stopped it was found that the lake had been lowered eleven feet.

THE GREAT WAIMUNGU GEYSER. *To face p.* 84.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WONDERS OF WAIRAKI.

After our wonderful visit to the Great Waimungu Geyser, we returned to Waiotapu, as we were told there was much to be seen in that valley. We arrived in time for lunch, and afterwards started on our expedition accompanied by a Maori guide. The ground being Maori property a very heavy entrance fee is exacted from visitors. The first place we stopped at was a sulphur cave; it was a small circular crater-like opening in the ground, into which, on looking down, the most brilliant sparkling crystals of bright yellow were to be seen. Thence we were taken to a large sheet of water; here we stopped whilst the guide, taking a shovel, scooped up some sand from the bank, and throwing it into the water it commenced to fizz and sparkle, bubbling to the surface like champagne; this it would do as often as the sand was tossed in.

We then visited the alum cliffs and sulphur falls, where there is a pretty little cascade, then the Great Mud Crater, and the Explosion Craters which are always in a state of seething ferment, and then the beautiful boiling lake, a vast cauldron of bright blue

water over which dense clouds of steam hovered. Here we witnessed a singular phenomenon. As we were standing looking down at the lake our shadows were projected on the steam cloud rising from the boiling waters at the opposite side of the pool; the silhouettes were so perfect that it was impossible not to distinguish each member of the party quite easily; the sun of course was shining brilliantly, and the effect very curious. We then went on to the Primrose Falls, so called from the colour given by the sulphur and silica deposited there by the water. The alum cliffs are white and glittering from the incrustations on the surface, and stand out boldly with a perpendicular face from the warm pools of water at their base. From here we walked towards the reservation grounds, and on our way stopped to examine some wonderful pools; the water was a clear transparent aquamarine, and was contained in small basins or cavities; the earth inside was coloured in layers of pink, red, yellow, chocolate, orange and green, all in varying shades lighter or darker in colour, and as we followed the path, the banks of earth were also brilliantly tinted.

At Waiotapu there is a government gaol which we visited. The prisoners live in small wooden houses, and are employed mostly in tree planting. They are well looked after, and firmly though kindly treated by the superintendent, Mr. Scanlon, who, as long as discipline and good conduct are complied with, does not subject them to any petty tyrannies. In going round the various departments of the gaol, we visited the kitchen where one of the prisoners

was preparing food for the midday meal. Everything was scrupulously clean, and the dinner, though simple, looked very nicely cooked. The dishes were of tin, with a division in the centre, which separated the meat from the vegetables, each man having his own dish. The men looked healthy, and it is due to the outdoor life in that glorious climate; the occupation, too, has its interest, and I have heard elsewhere that horticulture has had a very marked effect in helping to humanise and reform some of the worst and most degraded of criminals. His Majesty's Speech at the opening of the New Bailey strikes this note of humanity, which must have found an echo in all hearts; and I may venture to quote a few sentences:—

> The barbarous penal code which was deemed necessary one hundred years ago, has gradually been replaced in the progress towards a higher civilisation, by laws breathing a more humane spirit, and aiming at a nobler purpose. It is well that crime should be punished, but it is better that the criminal should be reformed.*

May these words of our humane Monarch be verified to their fullest extent in the years yet to come.

Our walk round the reservation grounds being over, we returned to the hotel in time for tea, thinking ourselves fortunate in finding such a good place as Falloona's Hotel in so wild and lonely a district as Waiotapu. A little garden, mostly grass and shrubs, went round the house, which was one-

* His Majesty's Speech at the opening of the New Bailey, Wednesday, 27th February, 1907.

storeyed, and was built entirely of wood, resting on wooden piles, which raised it from the ground. The space beneath the flooring of the house afforded shelter to many four-footed and feathered lodgers; amongst others a family of tiny black pigs; these little persons were of a most inquiring turn of mind, and liked to inspect everything. One day I had gone to my room, and as I walked down the verandah I heard squeaks that sounded as if very near, and thought the sound came from under the house; but as I entered, to my surprise there stood a tiny piglet in the middle of the room, taking a good survey of the apartment. The moment he caught sight of me he fled, uttering a volley of terrified squeals as he scampered off.

The night before we left Waiotapu the day had been chilly and a heavy damp fog enveloped the place, quite shutting out the view of Rainbow Mountain. It had not improved as night came on, and then we saw a curious phenomenon; the fog which was densely thick acted like a magic-lantern screen, and the bright light from the house at our back threw our shadows with wonderful distinctness on the sheet of fog; and so accurate was it that each person was easily distinguished. There must have been something unusual in the atmosphere, for one of the maids said whilst attending to the fire, "I am so frightened." "What is the matter?" I asked. The girl replied that some men had returned from Rainbow Mountain, where they had been pheasant shooting; they had gone out early in the morning, and said that the

whole day there had been outbursts of steam with reports all over the mountain, and she feared there might be an eruption. The whole of Rainbow Mountain is a smoking hot mass that looks as if it might explode at any time, so we were not sorry to get away safely when the coach came round to take us back to Rotorua.

It was now autumn, and the duck shooting was about to commence, so we arranged an expedition to Matata on the east coast, and settled to arrive the day before the sport began, so that the guns and all the gear would be quite ready, as the shooting would begin at daylight. We were told that the drive from Rotorua would be a long, though very beautiful one; the route ran by a chain of lakes, which followed in succession, with occasional tracks of bush dividing them. They were Lakes Rotorua, Rotoiti, Rotoehu and Rotoma; the first-named is the largest, and the last two exquisitely beautiful; the views were a series of charming pictures. On one of the last lakes the shore projects into the water, and here there was a Maori *wharé*, with a group of poplar-trees at the back; these had turned brilliant gold, and this glowing wealth of colour was reflected in all its glory on the mirror-like surface of the lake, and in this way picture after picture passed before our delighted eyes. The hand of autumn had touched leaf and berry; it had tinted the leaf with the fair golden glory of sunrise, and the berry with the sunset's fiery crimson; but what word painting is adequate to describe the glories of the bush, for to be understood it must be seen.

At last we stopped at the edge of one of the lakes to rest the horses and eat our lunch; of course we boiled the inevitable billy, for no New Zealander in the bush can get on without it; and having fed the horses we were ready in an hour and a quarter to start again, quite refreshed by the rest. We drove on till darkness set in, and we were glad enough to reach the hospitable little roadside inn, whose proprietor soon set before us an excellent dinner.

The next day was spent in overhauling the guns, and with daylight the following morning the sportsmen started; they found the birds plentiful and some good bags were made, but the honours of the day were with one of our party, whose splendid shooting gave him the lead, for he was a crack shot, and when the game was brought in, the artist of the *Auckland Weekly News* asked permission to have the game arranged, that a sketch might appear in the following week's news. One day it was proposed that we should make an excursion in canoes to the lagoon, taking our lunch with us, so we started early, each having a canoe. We had to go some distance up the lovely but narrow river before we reached the lagoon; on either side grew magnificent weeping willows, whose long branches, hanging like a lady's girdle, touched the water, and as the boat glided on, propelled by the paddle, we had with both hands to put them aside as we passed through. These trees were really lovely, for they had just turned yellow and hung down in graceful golden masses over the centre of the stream gazing

at their own loveliness as Narcissus did of old, enthralled by his own beauty.

On leaving the river we found ourselves in the open lagoon ; here were long stretches of blue water with large patches of reeds and rushes, in which the wild swans, duck, and other water birds used to shelter. The swans were very handsome, they were of the black species, with crimson beaks, and it was beautiful to see them wheeling about in flocks, high up in the blue sky above our heads ; these birds are not good eating, they are too rank and fishy, though the Maoris eat them. One was shot for the sake of its plumage, but the curing was not a success, for the skin was full of disagreeable-smelling oil, and as we were not experts in taxidermy the skin was spoilt, though we did our best. The return journey down the river was one long delight, for a gorgeous sunset faced us and lit up the golden willows with a magic glow that showed wonderful effects of light ; I much enjoyed the trip in the canoe, the silent gliding through the water is delightful.

There is a great difference in the method of paddling, as a good paddler can propel the canoe through the water smoothly, whilst another less expert will jerk the boat. The old Maori in my canoe, Opotiki, was a champion paddler, and his skill added much to the enjoyment of the trip. These canoes are very easily upset, so the voyager in one of these strange conveyances has to sit very still. One of the shooters a day or two previously had been upset. He was turning to aim at a duck when he overbalanced and fell into the water with

his gun, of which he fortunately did not let go; and when he rose to the surface old Opotiki, in his efforts to pull him into the canoe, tipped over himself, and so both got a ducking and had to return home, and the gun of course had to be entirely taken to pieces, dried, and screwed together again.

The next trip, after a short stay at Rotorua, was to Wairakei, whither we went by coach. We stayed at the Geyser Hotel, which is close to the banks of the Kiriohinekai, a hot stream which flows from the Blue Lake. The geyser valley is about a mile from the hotel, and in this beautiful spot all the geysers are to be found; the precipitous banks which bound the valley are from sixty to a hundred feet high, and the ground is covered with many varieties of the most beautiful mosses; and ferns droop in wild profusion from the steaming banks. Amongst the many geysers in this singular and beautiful little valley, the largest is the Great Wairakei Geyser, the crater is close under a perpendicular cliff of black rock; it plays about every eight minutes and throws up a column of water from fifteen to twenty feet high, which falls in sparkling showers of diamonds. The next in interest are the Twins (Nga-Mahanga), a couple of small geysers that play alternately every four and a half minutes, and very pretty they are tossing up their spray as if in friendly rivalry. The Prince of Wales' Feathers, the Eagle's Nest, and Dragon's Mouth, are only a few of the principal geysers in this wonderful valley. The guide Dick who conducted us round as the old guide Bob was away, said, "I call this the land of topsyturvey, as

everything which should remain below the surface comes above ground."

This little valley of wonders at Wairakei has not, I believe, its equal in the known world, it is so small and beautiful, contains such a variety of marvels, has so many geysers, hot pools, porridge pots of liquid mud, and terraces, and is such a perfect botanic garden luxuriant with strange shrubs and plants, mosses and ferns, that each visit to the enchanted ground never fails in interest. Ah! had I King Solomon's flying carpet, I would fain return to that bewitched valley and, sitting in the sunshine, I should watch the geysers play, and think of the changes Time brings on his aged wing, and many, many things besides. But (and but is a word that often intervenes) New Zealand is so far off, would it were nearer, though it is coming near to the Old Country as fast as steam can bring it; but not near enough yet for many who have not time for so long a journey, much as they would like to see one of the brightest gems in Britain's crown.

Our next expedition was to Taupo, a small township on the shores of a lake of the same name, but on our way there we stopped to see the Huka Falls, a splendid body of water which is spanned by a bridge, the view from the centre of which is very fine, but the grandest sight we thought was from the base of the fall. The Waikato river is here forced through a very narrow and deep chasm; the water rushes through with terrific and irresistible speed till, with a fearful roar, the wonderful shining mass of transparent blue leaps over a steep precipice into

the wide river below, where it breaks into masses of white foam, and passes onwards into the distant horizon on its errand of mercy, bearing comfort and fertility in its track by its wanderings through the thirsty land. Our next excursion was to the Ara-tea-tea rapids, a few miles from the hotel, and a small party of us drove there; we stopped where the road ended and had some rocks to climb and bush to go through. The driver Bill acted as guide. We soon heard the roar of the falling waters, and came to a rickety bridge of rough saplings and insecure planks spanning a small bye-flow from the rapids. I was following Bill and declared I could not venture across it—it made me giddy. "But you must come over; please give me your hand," and as he was peremptory and the rest of the party waiting, I lapsed into silence and was piloted over, though I did not like it.

But our troubles were not over, for the next shock was a long flight of wooden steps, with a shaky handrail. More protests, but I was forced ruthlessly on towards the third horror that awaited us, in the shape of a high domed rock, in which niches had been cut to place our feet. This was too much, and I again objected, but the inexorable Bill said, "But you must come. Why, fancy going home to say you were within sound of the rapids but had not seen them." And I was promptly hauled upwards, whilst a good-natured friend held one foot securely in the niche till the other was safely planted, and at last I found myself on the top of the rock, which projected into the water and seemed to me the centre

of a raging, foaming whirlpool. One glance sent my head spinning round, so sitting down I covered my eyes to the great amusement of my friends, and turning my back to the mad dance of the waters, I wondered what would happen next.

After a few moments I ventured to look at the rapids and was too fascinated to think of anything but the magnificent scene before me. On the upper part of the Fall to our right the rapids were divided into two arms, and these, uniting again a little further down, broke into a wild chaos of agitated water, wave dashing against wave, and churning the surface into masses of snow-white foam. It was a very Walpurgis Nacht, a mad, wild witches' revel of dancing water, that looked as if beckoning us to join its cantrips. The rapid then precipitated itself over a rocky ledge and, as if exhausted with its dance, though still flowing with tremendous velocity, gradually grew calmer the farther it went from the scene of its temporary madness, and swept onwards till it was lost to sight. Just below the Fall the water near the bank had formed a large whirlpool, and in this a quantity of timber was swept round and round with great velocity, a piece only occasionally escaping from its watery prison. After leaving the rock we were shown a place from which we could see the water falling over our heads. We went down a cleft, the guide going first grasped my hand firmly, and, telling me to lean well forward and look upwards, I saw the beautiful green water leaping in one vast sheet over my head. In our return, passing the stream, we saw under the shaky

bridge a quantity of pumice stone floating on the surface of the water, so we took some away with us as a useful souvenir of the lovely Ara-tea-tea rapids. We continued our way to Taupo, the lake on which it is situated is twenty-five miles long and about fifteen wide. The valley has a curious black terrace streaked with white and brown and a geyser, the Crow's Nest, which throws up a column of boiling water to about seventy or eighty feet; we were fortunate in seeing it play several times during our visit, as it often is not active, and there is no certainty about seeing it.

Two miles from Taupo there are some thermal baths and a pretty hotel which is full of visitors in the summer. Leaving Taupo we returned to Wairakei, and from there made an excursion to see the great steam hole Karapiti, which is on the hill-side, and three miles from the hotel; this great Fumarole, which we reached by a narrow path from above, can be seen for miles round the country, and the noise of its blowing off steam can be heard to a great distance; it makes a deafening roar, and, like the blow-holes at Waimungu, never varies either in volume or velocity. The guide gathered a large bundle of fern, and tying it up threw it into the crater, from whence it was instantly ejected with great force, and thrown up high into the air. Later on we visited a most interesting valley, where there were a number of still pools with coloured waters, all of different shades. One I remember was a marvellous shade of red purple like a petunia flower; the earths, too, were all brilliantly coloured, and

HARVESTING. [*To face p.* 96.

there was also boiling chemical water, and mud. It was altogether a very interesting little valley, and quite another of the wonders of this most extraordinary and highly favoured land.

From our excursion to Taupo, which was only for the day, we returned to the Geyser Hotel, Wairakei; it was then the middle of winter, which corresponds to our summer in Europe. The hotel and its grounds were surrounded by high hills, and as the sun rose late there was little or no warmth before the day was well advanced, so it was of course most bitterly cold; the water froze in the jugs, and at the breakfast-table, in spite of a large fire, ice floated on the milk, which was in glass jugs; even the outside door-mats were covered with hard frost, and the trees looked like the scene in a Christmas pantomime. I never remember seeing a harder frost, even in Old England, than bound Wairakei in its iron grasp. But our stay was drawing to a close, when one morning a Maori boy called Tau, whose duty it was to keep up the fires, came in with an armful of wood, and, throwing it into the grate with a crash, walked up to my chair and, lowering his voice to a mysterious whisper, said, "When you leave, we are going to give your party a royal salute." "Thank you, thank you, Tau," I replied, "that will indeed be nice." After a passing smile of amusement at the boy's eagerness I forgot the promise till later on it was brought very forcibly to my recollection.

The day we had arranged for our return to Rotorua was intensely cold, the Taupo coach with its team of

four horses arrived early in the morning, the animals were very restive and stamping with cold, and the leaders inclined to rear; men were standing at their heads whilst the luggage was being put in, and when this was done the coach started, and the driver, taking up the reins, swept round the back of the hotel, and as we neared the gate leading into the avenue, we saw three of our Maori friends standing on the lawn with their guns in hand. Bang! bang! bang! went the first volley. "It is the royal salute!" I cried, wishing them all at Jericho, as the terrified horses plunged madly forward, and we dashed at racing speed through the gate. Bang! bang! bang! again went the guns, and as the flying horses reached the end of the avenue the rocking coach swung round, as I thought, on two wheels, into the open road. I considered it was all over with us this time, and we must upset, but the coach righted itself, and the flying steeds, still pursued by another volley, did not quiet down till we were out of sound of the fusillade.

It was rather an exciting little episode, and, as I thought of the kindly wish of our simple Maori friends to do us honour, I reflected on the possible element of danger and our timely escape therefrom as the cartridges were loaded! And so we returned yet once again in safety to Brent's Bathgate House, Rotorua.

CHAPTER VIII.

OKOROIRE SANATORIUM

THE thermal zone of the Rotorua district presents such an amazing diversity of features that it might well be called one of Nature's great caprices, while the marvellous blending of beauty and horror in this home of the geyser cannot but strike the traveller with ever-recurring wonder. The zone abounds in every known form of thermal phenomena, is 120 miles long by 20 broad, and extends from Rotorua to Tongariro.

I have referred before to the lovely Wairakei Valley, its fairy-like vegetation, the drooping fern and clinging moss, the showers of diamond spray from great Wairakei's heart—all scenes of enchanting beauty; but there are other wonders, and those of horror, as at Tikitiri, a place about nine miles from Rotorua, a valley of desolation, full of mud volcanos and boiling springs, all in a furious state of activity, and shrouded in dense clouds of steam strongly impregnated with the fumes of sulphuretted hydrogen.

In the centre of this valley are two boiling lakes separated by a strip of land, and standing here one

could better understand the dread vision of Dante, whose mighty intellect must have pictured some such scene of gloomy horror. The sensation is a dreadful one, for the earth trembles beneath your feet, and throbs with the vibration of the awful hidden energy. This narrow neck of land is called "Hell's Gate," and crossing it we stood by the edge of the water, looking at the waves as they dashed in their fury against the sides of the grey shore; the noise of those waves, the cruel craving sound as of some hungry monster striving to seize its prey, inspired a feeling of unrest and repulsion as we turned shudderingly away. I can even now hear the sound of those waves beating in relentless fury with a rhythmic unrest against the walls of their gloomy prison.

Towards the north across a very dangerous bit of ground is the Inferno, a yawning black pit in the centre of which a large geyser throws up a fountain of liquid boiling mud. This grim and gloomy spot, that looks like a forgotten portion of Pluto's realm, is a dull and cheerless grey unrelieved by any brightening gleam of leaf or blossom to lend a softening grace to its eerie gloom.

Tikitiri is private property and belongs to a rich Maori woman of some position amongst her own people; she married a European who acts as guide, and they make a good deal of money out of the place, for payment is exacted from each tourist; and as great numbers visit this wonderful spot during the course of the year, the profits are pretty considerable.

Just beyond Tikitiri is a beautiful piece of bush

a mile in length, and through this we walked till we reached Rotokawau, a lovely green lake that nestles in a deep hollow; the contrast between the calm and graceful beauty of this lovely spot with the horrors of Tikitiri is most wonderful, and is an amazing example of the versatility of nature. We sat for a long time on the hillside gazing at the lake, then cheered and refreshed by the quiet beauty and absolute stillness of the scene, after the turmoil of Tikitiri, we returned through the bush by the same route we had taken in coming.

On the Rotorua line of rail there is a charming place called Okoroire, which can also be reached by driving through the bush. The air is bracing and the place possesses some curative baths and excellent trout fishing and shooting; altogether it is a delightful place for a short visit, so we arranged to go there, driving through the bush and stopping half-way for lunch; the scenery was charming and very varied, and our spirited pair of horses took us on at a spanking pace (as they called it out there).

The young driver, who was like Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drove furiously, was really a very good whip, and wished, I think, to show the travellers from the old country what the New Zealanders could do; so, as the latter part of our route lay along a steep and tortuous descent, our jehu jammed on the brake, and flicking up the horses, who did not require any incentive, we flew along the road at lightning speed in the most approved style. Everybody tried to look pleased till things began to fall out; away went a hat followed

by a rug, till a chorus of shouts brought the vehicle to a standstill, one of the party very kindly volunteered to retrieve the runaway articles, and we were thankful to pursue our way at a rather more leisurely pace.

Okoroire Sanatorium, as it is called, stands by itself on rising ground, with a charming view over the surrounding country; there is fine grazing ground and many good horses are bred in this district. I remember seeing a large drove brought in one morning, out of which seventy-five were selected to be sent to South Africa.* We went down to have a look at them, and the general opinion was that they were up to a very good standard and a moderate price.

The Waikato River flows past Okoroire, and a little below the hotel is a very pretty fall which rushes under a natural rocky bridge, and here the rainbow trout are to be seen leaping through the water.

Close to the river is the bath-house, and there several baths are to be found, varying in temperature. One of these, the Fairy Bath, well deserves its name; it is enclosed on one side by a wooden shed, which is arranged in compartments for dressing, and is roofed over. The bath itself is a natural formation and circular in shape; the roof is the blue sky; the water which rises from a spring and bubbles up through the bright golden sand is about four feet deep and delightfully warm; graceful ferns and grasses droop like a fringe round the edges of the

* For remounts during the Boer War.

pool, pretty flowering shrubs and trees hang over the water, whilst the tiny spirit bird of the Maoris fluttered from branch to branch singing its little song of joy and thankfulness, whilst the sunbeams danced over the water. At night the beauty of this fairy pool was even more enhanced when the moon cast her silvery rays over the water, and the glow-worms shed their mystic green light from amongst the moss and ferns; when the roar of the cataract and the chirp of a sleepy bird were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the night; then the beauty and poetry of the scene impressed itself upon the soul, and memory strove to gather up some missing link with a remote past—a freer, purer, simpler life in far-away ages.

There are some charming excursions to be made about Okoroire, and picnics in the bush and fishing-teas were organised.

A small party of us drove one day to a pretty spot on the river, the fishermen went off with their rods, leaving the ladies to prepare tea in their absence. We unpacked the baskets and collected some wood, built a nice fire, and slung up the billy; this being done we just had to light the fire and then it was all ready, and we only wanted a match, just one little lucifer; but to our disgust there were none to be found, so we waited in patience till one of the fishermen returned. He was an old man whose opinion of the fair sex was, I fear, not very high, for he smiled sarcastically when he found the fire was not lighted, so we suggested he should boil the billy and make the tea, whilst we borrowed his rod

to try for a trout we had seen up stream. He consented and we left him to his own devices, and on returning found the hungry fishermen had come back, so we sat down and I was asked to dispense the tea. "Why! What is the matter?" they cried, as I looked suspiciously at the billy. "Matter, this is not tea, it is nothing but hot water. Mr. ——, what did you do with all the tea I gave you? This is so colourless it would not affect the nerves of a butterfly! I'll soon see," so removing the lid of the can I took out the muslin bag and found our clever friend had tied the tea so tightly up that the water had hardly penetrated through. This was soon remedied and we had the satisfaction of a good laugh at his expense.

Our old friend, who held a post in one of the South Sea islands, had, I think, mostly administered justice to the native population, and was therefore unaccustomed to the society of many well-educated women (as there were very few European residents), women, moreover, who held opinions of their own. One evening we were discussing a little book then recently published, in which the author, speaking of women, gave it as his opinion, that "they should be whipped back into their former position of dependence." Our old friend was delighted, and remarked, "they were becoming a great deal too forward, that they had no business to seek work as telegraphists, telephonists, post-office clerks, and typewriters, taking the bread out of the men's mouths!" "I do not agree with you," I said, "a position of dependence may have answered a few thousand years ago, but

will not do for this year of grace, when the female population is in excess of the male and polygamy is prohibited in Christian countries. Women would starve if they did not work, and certainly the paternal Government could not maintain them in the luxury of idleness." My old antagonist gave me a look that meant instant annihilation, and growled out, "Well! if I had anything to do with you I should lock you all up!" At which I retorted, "I am very glad you can't, so good-bye."

The shooting at Okoroire was excellent, quail, pheasants and pokaka were plentiful; the quail are pretty birds with a little top-knot of feathers on the head; this species is, I believe, called Californian quail. Hares, too, were abundant; they seemed to me larger than those in the old country, and had ears very handsomely marked in dark burnt brown.

The rabbit pest was as bad here as elsewhere, and as in most other places the method for their destruction was poison.

One day noticed two men ride up to the hotel store, each had a canvas bag slung over his shoulder, and a spade strapped in a slanting way across his back; they looked odd, and I wondered what their occupation might be. On enquiring I was told they were the Poisoners; the name did not sound pleasant.

"But what do they poison?" I asked. "Rabbits," was the reply; "the Government is trying to get rid of the pests." I afterwards had an opportunity of seeing their methods.

On either side of the Okoroire road runs a broad

strip of turf, at intervals a sod is turned up, on the top of which is placed a small piece of dough about an inch long, containing some powerful poison which destroys the animal; the poison kills a great number of rabbits, but the opinion is that many pheasants, quail and hares, besides other game, are also sacrificed, which is a pity.

One of the pleasant little drives in the vicinity of Okoroire is to the trout hatcheries; the Superintendent was very kind (as he saw we were much interested) in showing us round the sheds and tanks, and the growth of the fish from the earliest stages until they are fit to be sent away to stock the lakes and rivers, to which they are conveyed in large tin cans.

We were told a curious thing about the conveying of the fry to their destination. Some years ago, in the initial stages of the artificial hatching process, the fry were to be sent to stock some waters where there was no convenient means of transport, so with some fear as to the results, the fry were put into the tins with air-holes in the covers, and a couple of these tins were slung on to each pony. After several days' marching the fish arrived looking healthy and very lively; the superintendent said that the constant shaking and jolting of the ponies aerated the water and thus kept it from stagnating.

It was interesting to see the large fish being fed; they seemed very voracious and dashed about vigorously in pursuit of the food as it was thrown to them, and very beautiful they looked as they flashed by, showing their glowing rose-coloured stripes and

shining silver bodies. They are all classified as to age, for the rainbow trout is somewhat of a cannibal, and would very soon devour his younger and weaker brothers if he felt hungry.

Life in New Zealand is essentially outdoor, the equable climate, especially of the North Island, lends itself to open-air existence, which makes life healthier and altogether more enjoyable, so to the pleasure-seeker, picnics and afternoon teas under the blue canopy of the sky are a very real happiness. At Okoroire the tea picnics were in great favour.

One day we drove a few miles to a pretty bit of bush; here we lighted a fire to boil the billy and a good deal of dry bracken fern was used, as it burnt briskly, but when the tea was brewed it had a most unusual flavour. I thought I could hear the polite tea vendor saying, "Quite a new blend, madam," and it was indeed something quite out of the way in temperance drinks, but as there was no more water to be procured we concluded it was best to be happy and drink our fern tea without any grumbling.

There is a good deal of rich farmland belonging to the Okoroire hotel, and during the period of our stay the fields were covered with mushrooms in great quantities, so we used to organise expeditions for gathering them and brought back baskets full. We peeled them for cooking, so that no legitimate objection could be raised by the kitchen authorities at the additional work.

Our visit to Okoroire being ended, we returned to Rotorua, and a little later planned a visit to Tauranga, a charming township of some importance

on the Bay of Plenty, lying on the east coast of the North Island. We arranged a drive from Rotorua, and starting early, drove down through some fine bush scenery, and in a few hours reached the half-way house, where we stopped to feed the horses. The landlady, a bright, rosy-cheeked Scotch woman, gave us an excellent lunch. We inquired about the state of the roads and were dismayed to hear they were in a bad and very rough condition, and just as we were about to drive off she waved her hand, wishing us a good journey, with the parting injunction, "Deed, an' ye maun just be verra carefu,' and the leddies haud on wi' baith han's, for a Maori puir mon cam through the morn, and if he had'na tied himsel wi' a rope intil the gig (for he was a muckle fearsome body), he micht ha' faan oot!" So with this Parthian shot, and her good-humoured face wreathed with smiles, she disappeared from our sight.

The road was quite up to its bad reputation; we were jolted backwards and forwards, tossed up from our seats and banged down again very hard; the ruts in the road were so deep that we thought an upset inevitable, but after awhile we got to a better track leading up a rocky gorge, a very fine bit of scenery, and at last arrived at the good road leading into Tauranga, from which we obtained a beautiful view of the town and blue sea.

Tauranga is very picturesque, it is nicely laid out, and most houses have their prettily cultivated gardens.

At the outskirts of the town, that terror of the

farmer, the gorse, lights up the country with its golden glory; the land looks rich and fertile, but it has one peculiarity, any cattle put on to graze do well for a few months, and then go off in condition till they become literally skin and bone, when their value is so seriously depreciated that they have to be removed. I have seen cattle on this land literally skeletons. I have never yet heard any specific reason assigned for the curious fact, but it still remains, though perhaps they may have more recently discovered the reason.

Tauranga, as the gate to the lake district, was a place of great strategic importance in the days of the Maori wars. The Great Pah, which was their strongest fortress, occupied a commanding position overlooking a good area of country, and was defended with great courage and obstinacy by the Maoris.

I heard an amusing story about the Great Pah, from a dear old lady in Auckland, which she told me occurred at the end of the war, when she was quite a girl. Her father had a property not far from the fortress, and one day when she was wandering with her brother over the battle-ground, they came upon a shell, and her brother exclaimed, "I will take this home, it will do to tie the calves to in the field," so it was carried home and placed, as suggested, in the field close to the house. On looking at the shell his sister said, "Why! I do believe the shell has not been fired. Let us fizzle it off!" Her brother consented. "But we must be careful," he said, "or we might have a bad accident, so let us

first lay a nice train of gunpowder, then you run into the house, and I will fire it and make for the ditch."

The gunpowder train was laid, the little sister ran into the house, and her brother, putting a match to the powder, made a dash for the ditch, and lay down flat in his shelter.

The experiment succeeded far beyond their happiest anticipations, for the shell exploded with a fearful report, blowing up the palings of the fence and converting a wheelbarrow into matchwood, and ploughing up the ground, it scattered a shower of iron cubes in all directions. Then there was trouble.

The children were not aware that the firing of a gun from the Great Pah was the prearranged signal of another Maori rising, so with the explosion of the shell the whole station was roused; there was arming in hot haste, the troops turned out with great promptitude, and at the double soon reached the scene of the supposed rising, and on reconnoitring found no enemy, but a scene of smiling peacefulness, in the immediate vicinity of the Maori fortress.

The astonished and wrathful commandant found on making enquiries that the supposed native rising was a myth, and the troops victims of an unpremeditated practical joke by two mischievous young monkeys.

The Maori population numbers about 42,000, but it is to be regretted that they are decreasing numerically; it looks as if their fate would be eventual absorption into the greater race. The

change, too, from their simple habits and mode of life, to a more advanced state of civilisation, is also accountable for this, and consumption, to which they have become very liable, is a dire factor in their decrease. Physically a splendid race, they are also intelligent, learn quickly, and have a strong poetical tendency, which is shown by their national legends. They are a brave, happy-go-lucky people, but communal habits have unfortunately made them averse to work, unless absolutely driven by circumstances to do so.

Some of their national customs are very curious, such as their burial rites. Whilst we were at Tauranga we went to the obsequies of a chief, whose English name was Adam Clark.

We drove a few miles out of Tauranga along some very broken cross roads, and stopping at the brow of a hill, got out of our conveyance, and descending the slope, found ourselves in a large green field divided by a wire fence; here the chief with a few followers advanced to meet us, and made us welcome in his own name and that of his tribe.

The field faced the sea, and at one side there were some *wharés* and a large assembly hall or meeting house. On one side of the dividing fence the women were seated in couples, stooping forward with their foreheads touching; they were making a melancholy wailing sound, and tears streaming down their faces, fell into their laps; they would occasionally stop the keening and tears, and indulge in a little conversation, and then begin afresh. The

other women not engaged in mourning were preparing the Kapa Maori, which is a pile of stones rounded and smooth seashore flints, which they heat till very hot, and pouring water over them it generates steam, and in this they place the potatoes and kumaras (a species of yam, or sweet potato), and this cooks the vegetables through, indeed practically steams the tubers, and very nice they are when thus cooked.

On the other side of the fence the men were collected and busy cooking pork. There was a large fire, and the meat was placed in round iron pots, five or six in a row, slung on a pole across the fire. The amount of meat consumed was enormous, as the funeral rites continue for a week and all comers have to be entertained and hospitably lodged.

The pigs which supply the Maoris with their pork are curious-looking little animals; they are of a very small breed, greyish in colour with slightly arched backs; they are the semi-wild and degenerate descendants of progenitors that had been let loose on the island by Captain Cook, when he first landed.

The flowers in Tauranga were beautiful and the variety so great that spring and autumn blooms were growing side by side. I remember a camellia-tree about fourteen feet high, one glorious pyramid of red bloom. Fruit, too, was very plentiful, and here I recollect seeing and tasting for the first time the tree tomato. It is an egg-shaped fruit, and in colour and consistency very much resembles a tomato and in shape it is like an egg plum. The gardens and country about this beautiful district were most

luxuriant, and the Bay of Plenty, as it is now, well deserves its name.

One of the most interesting and characteristic sights in New Zealand is the Maori regatta at Ngaruawhia (or Newcastle); it is seventy-four miles from Auckland, and situated at the junction of the Waikato and Waipa rivers. The scenery here is beautiful; the two rivers meet, and one of these dividing above the junction, gives the idea that a third river mingles with the others, till they combine and flow on in one broad stream.

It is at the meeting of these waters where the regatta is held, as a large piece of land extends into the stream, and makes a good point of vantage to view the sports.

The scene is a brilliant one; the green grass carpets the ground, and fine trees afford delightful shade overhead. Maoris arrive in great numbers, bringing their food with them, quite prepared to enjoy the happiest of holidays. All are dressed in their best, and the variety of colour gives the scene the appearance of an Eastern bazaar.

The Maori is essentially a child of the sun, and his love of colour shows itself in his attire. The women wear satin dresses of every shade, from poppy red to saffron yellow, and cerulean blue to imperial purple; all is gaiety and brightness. Maori as well as Pakeha are happy, little groups of both races sit with their families or friends scattered about on the grass, and over all streams the warm sunshine; it trembles through the shady green leaves and dances gaily on the waters, gilding Nature and

her children with a transient glory, the reflect of a far-off world.

But the sports commence; two stately war canoes, manned by thirty stalwart warriors armed with their paddles, dash up to the starting point; the spectators rush to the edge of the water and the signal to start is given.

They are off; the paddles work in careful unison, the canoes answer to the urgent propulsion; neck and neck they flash through the shining water; the wildest excitement prevails, friends shout encouragement from the shore. One canoe at last gains ground, gradually at first, and then most perceptibly the distance increases, when with a magnificent spurt the winning canoe is declared victor of a well-fought fight.

After this followed many other canoe races, the canoe steeplechase was the most amusing; a couple of stakes had been driven into the bed of the river, and between them was suspended a swinging bar of wood just above the surface of the water; each canoe had an occupant, and the thing was to make the canoe jump over the bar. It was really curious; the paddler sitting in the stern of the boat got up the speed, and then rushing the bar, the bows being higher than the stern the canoe, though in a somewhat clumsy way, leaped over the obstacle. Sometimes the occupant was unfortunate and got upset into the water, which delighted the spectators, and the unlucky one received scant sympathy, but when a victory was scored the applause was overwhelming.

We left Ngaruawhia, having, like all the pleasure-seekers, very much enjoyed our day, which will always remain a pleasant entry in memory's log-book.

After this interesting day we returned to Hamilton, which was on our way back to Auckland. It is a pretty little township situated on the Waikato River, and is in a very rising district where there are both cheese and butter factories.

Shrewsbury, a small township in the same district, is noted for its honey. The fields all round Shrewsbury are sown with red clover, and a great many apiaries have been established, which produce vast quantities of the most delicious white honey of a peculiarly delicate flavour. We took a good many drives round the district, which seemed to be in a thriving condition.

During the few days we were at Hamilton, we stayed at Bright's Hotel. On entering the hall I noticed a stuffed leopard, and as I returned from the dining-room I stood idly looking at it; but to my surprise there was placed close to the leopard, a most beautifully stuffed cockatoo; he was snowy white, with a sulphur crest on his head. I looked at the bird and wondered why I had not noticed him before, saying to myself, "He is really very life-like."

The thought was hardly through my brain when, putting his head on one side, he shouted up at me, "Well!" I sprang as if shot, for the wicked bird had given me a fright, but if I was frightened he was not in the least abashed, for he waddled off the platform, and catching hold of my skirt waited to

have his feathers stroked. We became very good friends, and often when I came downstairs I would hear a croak, and looking about would see Cocky perched on some coign of vantage from which he would roar down at me, "Well! Well!!"

A FURROWED STEAM PLOUGH. [*To face p.* 116.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WAITOMO CAVES

During one of our many delightful visits to Rotorua, some friends proposed we should make an expedition to the Waitomo Caves, situated at a few hours' journey by rail. Accordingly we arranged to stay the night at a small thermal station called Te Aroha, a picturesque township lying at the foot of a high conical mountain, also called Te Aroha (the mountain of love), which rises over 3,000 feet above the plain, and from the summit of which there was a very beautiful and extended view over the country in the direction of the Thames Valley gold mining district.

We were anxious to see this view, so settled to stay at the Hot Springs Hotel for two nights, which would give us one whole and unbroken day for the expedition. As the ascent was a long one and would take some hours to accomplish, we started soon after breakfast, and taking some sandwiches leisurely made our way up the mountain, frequently sitting down to rest during our climb. An easy pathway wound gradually up the hill, and on either side grew pretty shrubs and ferns, while the fine trees overhead afforded agreeable shelter from the sun. At last

we reached the summit, and the view quite came up to our expectations. A lovely stretch of level country lay before us, through which the Waihou river wound like a ribbon of silver, the clear outlines of valley, hill and wood forming a charming variety in the landscape. Far away stretched the land holding out its hands till it met the blue sea, and both were enfolded in soft grey mist that blended land and ocean in one distant dream of mystery. The township of Te Aroha had long been known for its hot springs and baths; these are to be found in the centre of the town behind which the mountain rises. There is a pretty and very nicely kept public garden where tennis and other games are played. These lawns and gardens belong to the hot springs, and in these grounds are the fine range of baths in a nice building, which contains most of the up-to-date appliances of a modern spa. In walking through the grounds one finds brass taps to every curative spring. All are numbered, and the guidebook explains the properties of each; there are eighteen different springs, of which fifteen are hot. I remember seeing, not very far from these gardens, a plot of ground which was private property; it was not over twenty feet square, yet within this small space there were no less than six chemical springs, each with a different property. One spring in the domain, which I must not omit to mention, was said to possess great strengthening powers for weak eyes; we tried it and found the water most refreshing, it was singularly cool and seemed to invigorate the eyes, indeed it was, we thought, slightly astringent.

Our two days in this pretty spot passed very quickly, and we then took rail to Hangatiki; the distance from Te Aroha is not great, but it took us a good many hours to accomplish. I never was in a slower train, it simply crawled and stopped on every possible occasion. After some of these stops I heard peals of laughter and shouts of "There he goes," "That was a near shot, it gave him a great start." Curiosity prompted me to go and see what was the excitement, and on the platform of the next carriage I saw a group of young urchins, who had jumped down on to the permanent way and filled their pockets with stones with which they were taking shots at the rabbits that were bobbing about on the grass-land at either side of the track. I was about to lecture the young scamps on the cruelty of throwing stones, when I reflected it was about as useless to reprove the boys for throwing stones as it might be to lecture the rabbits for hopping about within reach of the missiles, so as no damage was done I held my peace.

At last we arrived at the little wayside station, and getting out walked to the Government rest-house; here we found an obliging old man, the caretaker, who gave us some tea and ordered a carriage to call for us at 6 P.M. It seemed a funny hour to be starting on a sight-seeing expedition as it was now quite dark, but then I thought why, of course, the hour of day or night makes no difference underground, as once inside the caves artificial light will only be necessary; so we started cheerfully, having brought with us a good supply of candles, and some

rolls of magnesium wire; and fortunate it was we did so, as we afterwards found out.

Our driver was a Maori; he brought a light wagonette and pair of horses; we had about five miles to drive; the road was very bad, occasionally a violent bump would make the vehicle lurch and throw us forward into the car; the driver said the road was really quite good now compared to what it was a few years ago; for since those days he had often done a bit of repairing himself, and knew every stone on the way. Of course this sounded very reassuring, but then the comfort was somewhat neutralised when we crashed over a large piece of rock and were thrown into the middle of the car in a heap, from which we had to sort ourselves out as best we could! However, everything comes to him who knows how to wait, and at last we pulled up at a small *wharé* (house) a little way off the track, where we saw a dim light flickering; and on the driver shouting out, a Maori came running down the hill.

He told us to leave all our wraps in the carriage as we should not require them, for we should soon be warm enough later on. He then produced a small piece of candle out of his pocket, and leading the way with this brilliant illumination we stumbled along on foot as well as the darkness permitted. Twenty minutes brought us to the side of the mountain where there was a small door fastened by a padlock; this was opened and the guide said in a very casual way, "I suppose you have brought some candles?" "Yes," we replied, "we have

plenty; but supposing we had not brought any, did you think you could have shown our party round the caves with that small bit in your hand?" We ladies had fortunately taken the precaution of shortening our skirts, so we were able to climb and move about easily; in one hand we each carried a candle, while the other remained free.

The entrance was low, but very soon increased in height as we advanced into the interior. The caves are of limestone formation; they are of wonderful and fairy-like beauty, and the variety of form quite astonishing. Some are of immense proportions, many resembling the interior of a cathedral, others are like grottos; all are formed of limestone deposit; some are of the purest white dazzling like snow, and others gradually shaded to a yellow tint till it reached the colour of dark tortoiseshell. In an upper cave at the side of the wall was a range of palm tree pillars that looked as if nature had sculptured them as supports for the roof of the rocky chamber. Further on we came to a vast cavern of stalactites and stalagmites; scientists can calculate with the greatest accuracy how many hundreds of years would elapse until they reached each other; and as I watched the slow fall of a crystal drop I thought how beautiful was the idea of their patient working and waiting through the long, long years until the moment of their reunion should come. Most of the caves were very damp from the constant drip drip of the water from overhead; the flooring of some of the upper caves was covered with a greasy white substance similar to modelling-clay.

It is impossible for me to give a full and detailed account of these marvellous caves, and the wondrous variety of form they exhibit, or the beauty and elegance of the designs. The caves are on different levels, and to reach those that were below, for they descend to the level of the river which flows through the cavern, we had to climb down some wooden step ladders that were unpleasantly slippery. As we reached each cave the guide set light to the magnesium wire which illuminated the whole scene, making it like fairyland. One very curious thing we saw in what the guide called the shawl cavern was a common white bed-blanket that had been hung up by two corners, and the water had dripped on to it till it was completely encased in a strong covering of lime, and when the guide held up the lighted magnesium wire behind it, you could see the red and blue stripes at the top, for it was quite clear, and on knocking this petrified blanket it gave out a resonant and very musical sound.

The alabaster pillars were very lovely and dazzling white in colour, and a large cave called the reception room was a thing of wonder; the supreme beauty of these caves, with their varied and graceful formations, was their absolute purity of colour, white as driven snow, unsullied and untarnished they grew in their primeval spotlessness, increasing in beauty as the countless years rolled on, they but added to their loveliness amid the darkness and silence of their strange home; whilst the hand of Time, taking naught from their beauty, only added to their grace and lustre with a lingering caress.

From the caves that were on a level with the entrance in the mountain-side we made several descents, till we reached a longer flight of wooden steps that were very slippery from the drippings of water overhead; we then went still lower, and the last flight was long and steep; one felt very insecure holding the rail in one hand and the candle in the other, trying to grope along in the darkness that was only made more visible by the flickering candles. I was glad when we reached the bottom, and we found ourselves walking on the soft sand which formed the flooring of the large caves on the lowest level. The floor rose gently till we stood on a bank of sand, and when the guide lighted the magnesium wire we found ourselves on the edge of a black and swiftly-flowing stream. It was the river that had forsaken the sunshine and blue sky to wander through the dark recesses of the nether world. A bold cliff projected into the water, and from the back of this came the river, which, gliding with stealthy and silent speed past our feet, disappeared into the gloomy and mysterious recesses of the cavern.

On the opposite side of the water, immediately facing us, a bank of sand sloped upwards till it seemed to meet the roof of the cavern; the dark shadows and black water formed a gloomy scene, and as we gazed we almost expected to see old Charon with his boat rounding the frowning bluff to ferry his passengers across the Styx, but instead of Charon the voice of the guide was heard, as he directed us to put out our lights; we leisurely obeyed, not knowing the wonderful transformation scene we were to behold.

I thought to myself, "Why, we shall be in complete darkness." The thought no sooner stirred in my mind when lo! a wondrous sight burst upon our astonished eyes. The ceiling of the whole vast area of the cavern was softly resplendent with the light of countless thousands of glow-worms; in such dense masses they covered the roof with their green opalescent light that they illuminated the scene, and so bright was the radiance that the rocks were reflected in the river, and the tiny glow-worm lights twinkled like stars on a frosty night as they begemmed the dark glassy surface of the water.

I never beheld anything so exquisitely lovely or more wonderful. The river that flows through these caves enters from the gorge outside; at one time the caves were only accessible from the river by canoe, but since then a new entrance has been discovered (that through which we came). The Maoris had known of the caves for many years, but were too superstitious to attempt any explorations, as they dreaded the Taniwhas (monsters) which were supposed to haunt the entrance by the river.

The lovely sight being over, we relighted our candles with great regret and began our return journey. We were all very hot and tired, as we had been walking incessantly for four hours without any rest; we were very glad to get into the carriage and be driven back to the rest-house. One of the carriage lamps would not burn, so we had some trouble on the way, and one of the party who was on the coach-box by the driver had to hold the solitary lamp and throw the light straight in the middle of the road; so our progress

was slow. However we eventually arrived safely, though in a dreadfully dirty and dishevelled state. The tailor-made skirts were plastered with white mud and candle-grease, and the next day, when we got back to Rotorua, they had to be put into water and well washed; and we all agreed that a miner's kit would have been the best costume for such an expedition.

I think one of the most charming tours we made during our first trip to this beautiful country was to the Wanganui river, called the Rhine of New Zealand. This lovely stream is 110 miles long from its source in Mount Tongariro till it reaches the sea coast.

We started on the expedition from Wanganui, a pretty little town on the banks of the river, about five miles from its mouth, and proceeded by one of Messrs. Hattericks' steamers to Pipiriki. The scenery increased in beauty as we moved forward. At intervals we stopped at some Maori villages with strange biblical names, where the children came to the boat selling flowers and a great variety of well-grown and delicious fruit. I recollect that at one station they brought small baskets of large, sweet, luscious mulberries that reminded me of the Shahtout or King mulberry that grows to such perfection in the Happy Valley of Cashmere. From a few miles below Taumaranui the river enters a series of gorges shut in by high precipitous cliffs. As we proceeded these rose in height, and the steep banks on either side of the stream were clothed with luxuriant bush such as the traveller does not meet with in Europe.

One beautiful picture succeeded another in almost too rapid and bewildering sequence, till late in the afternoon we reached Pipiriki, where there is a very fine hotel or accommodation house, and there we spent the night, starting early the next morning for the upper reaches of the river. The larger steamer which usually went this trip was not then running, as she was under repair; so, as we were a small party, they put us into a little flat-bottomed launch especially constructed for shooting the rapids, and with our lunch-baskets on board we started.

The day was glorious, the sunshine brilliant, and the sky turquoise blue with not a breath of air to ruffle the surface of the river. After proceeding some miles through the most enchanting scenery where the ferns and grasses fringed the shore the captain of the boat slowed down, and bid us look into the water at the double reflection. It was very singular: there was first the object, then the reflection thereof, as sharp and clear as the original, and then a repetition of the first reflection, but in fainter outline and more subdued tone, though still marvellously clear. Advancing farther up the river the launch stopped, and we disembarked to see the waterfall cavern. We entered the side of an overhanging cliff, and crossing a light wooden bridge descended a few steps, and found ourselves under a very lofty rocky archway which was the entrance to a large cavern. Lovely ferns grew round this arch, and the sound of falling waters came to us; a few steps forward revealed a cascade, which was a most beautiful mass of foaming white water coming out of the darkness from we

ON THE WANGANUI RIVER. [*To face p.* 126.

knew not where. The light was dim, and the difference between the sunshine and glowing brilliancy of the outer world to the dim cool recesses of the waterfall cavern was indeed very striking, and made one of those marvellous contrasts with which this fairy-like land abounds. On leaving the cavern we returned to the launch and in due course reached the rapids. There is a difference of fifteen feet between the level of the river at Pipiriki and the upper reaches; so when we got to the rapids, where the water was sweeping down with tremendous velocity, the boatmen got out some grappling hooks with which they groped in the bed of the river (that was shallow here) for a twisted wire hawser that had been laid there; this they passed round the steam-winch, and by the help of it we were hauled up the rapids. The noise of the rushing water was deafening and was mostly caused by its rattling over the stones in the river bed. After ascending the first rapid we approached a glorious bit of scenery called "The Drop Scene," as it is said to resemble the curtain of a theatre. It is a conical mountain covered with vegetation of the most graceful and varied kind, growing in the wildest abandon of luxuriance; the beauty was enhanced by the atmosphere that surrounded the lovely mountain, which was a soft misty blue that deepened to purple as it reached the base at the river's edge. I think I have never seen anything more strikingly lovely than this masterpiece of Nature's painting. I see it now as distinctly as on that summer's morning, and memory has indelibly impressed the glamour of

the scene upon my mind in glowing colours that can never fade.

As we proceeded further up the river we stopped to see a Maori village, and a large war canoe that had been stranded high and dry on the bank many years before, when there had been a very great flood; and there the poor thing had remained all these long years to be shown as a curiosity, not of its own prowess in battle but of the caprices of the river. It was very curious how it could have floated up so high, as it was quite a long and steep walk from the river to the place where it lay amongst the drooping trees and tall grasses. On gaining the top of the bank we found the ground quite level, and a number of Maori houses dotted about. In the centre of the village was a large square piece of ground which had been cleared of all grass and plants; this had been damped well and hammered down, and here we found the whole village and their friends assembled, all squatting on the ground; in the centre an open space had been reserved, and at the corners stood four women with their hands folded and wreaths of fern on their heads: they were singing a dirge which sounded very melancholy. I asked the Maori woman, who was acting as guide and could speak English, what was the matter and why the people were assembled; she replied it was a tangi (burial), and the four women with wreaths were mourning for the chief of their tribe. I said it was very sad for death to have taken away their good chief, when the women turning sharply round replied, "Oh, but he is not dead." "Not dead!" I cried in astonishment; "then why

are you having a funeral and mourning for him?" "He is not dead yet," she replied, "but he will be soon."

The idea was an eerie one, so I said no more. We then returned to the launch and taking our seats commenced the return journey; and now the real excitement of the day commenced, that of shooting the rapids. We were going at a tremendous pace as we neared the agitated water, and all the men were on the alert fending off the boat when too near the rocks. Now that the critical moment had arrived we ladies looked on fascinated but anxious. Some one shouted out, "Here we go!" and with a swish, swish, we had shot the first rapid, and the water was fighting hard to crush us up against the rocks, but we shot all the rapids in safety, thinking ourselves fortunate in having escaped the jaws of Scylla and Charybdis without being upset.

After our trip to Wanganui we returned to Rotorua, and from there to our headquarters at Mount Nessing, Auckland. On arriving many of my child friends came running in to see me, asking eagerly when I should be able to tell them some stories. I gladdened their hearts with a speedy promise and they ran off quite contented.

I heard an amusing anecdote of one little fellow who was rather fond of long words. He had not been well and the doctor was sent for. Some one hearing this said, "Well, sonnie, so the doctor has been to see you: what did he say?"

"He said," replied the youngster, "I was to be fed on ferocious (farinaceous) foods!"

After a short but very pleasant stay in Auckland we started for Whangarei, a place situated on the eastern coast of the North Island. We took the steamer *Clansman*, and when a little way down the coast the kind skipper asked us on to the bridge from which he pointed out all the striking bits of scenery. I quite enjoyed the little voyage, and was fortunate at supper in sitting next to a very amusing Australian who entertained me with some good stories. On a recent voyage he said he had overheard two stewards talking one morning, and the cabin steward said to the factotum of the baths, "Well, but did you get that bath ready after all?"

"Oh, yes," a melancholy voice replied, "I got the bath right enough, but then I lost the gent, and when I found the gent then I lost the bath. Things does run crooked in this world!"

I cannot resist relating a keen encounter of wits between the captain of the vessel on my last voyage to New Zealand and the Bishop of ——. The Bishop did not like the weather, which became very rough, and his lordship with many of the passengers did not appear till more halcyon days prevailed. As we neared Port Said the Bishop was on deck when the captain came round, and turning to him he remarked, "We have had very rough weather, captain: is it not unusual?"

"Certainly, most unusual at this season," said the captain with a malicious twinkle in his eye. "Indeed I may say it was quite abnormal. But—ahem!—of course, my lord, you know we had Jonah here."

"Ha, ha," laughed the genial prelate; "then why didn't you throw him overboard?"

On landing at Whangarei we found a nice little township with an excellent hotel where we were most comfortable during our stay. We made several excursions, and one was to the limestone rocks where we went by rail; they were a very curious natural formation, and when standing at a little distance away they had the appearance of a series of Hindoo temples of a rich style of architecture, and there seemed to be a succession of them standing on the sloping ridge of rock; they were most picturesque and beautiful in their whiteness and fantastic shape, each being a replica of the other; it was passing strange how nature should have fashioned them thus, and it was hard to believe they were not the work of human hands. Without much effort of imagination I thought myself again in India, and had I but seen a few monkeys jumping about on the walls the illusion would have been complete. There were a good many lime-kilns in the place, and quantities of the stone were being quarried out for burning, though of course the beautiful natural temples had not been touched, but the quarrying was greatly destroying the charm of the wild scenery, and as time goes on matters will not improve. We wandered about for a long while, and after eating our frugal lunch of sandwiches, as it was not yet time for the train to pick us up, we took out our little toy Winchester rifle, and setting up a paper target against a rock started a little shooting match. After firing a shot or two and scoring a bull's eye, we heard a voice behind us

saying, "A very good shot, very good indeed," and on turning round we saw a grimy looking man with a face as black as his clothes, but as in the colonies one talks to everybody regardless of appearances, we said "Good day," and began a conversation on the merits of the toy rifle.

We found our new acquaintance was a coal miner, a Scotchman of the name of John Frazer; from him we got much interesting information about the mines. Some of the New Zealand coal is of the finest quality; it is the deepest and most glossy black, resembling unpolished jet; if touched it does not blacken the fingers; it burns brilliantly without much smoke and is like English anthracite.

Our miner friend also told us about the Kauri gum-fields; he said the men in the coal mines were allowed, during their off days, to dig for gum. He asked if I had ever seen any in the rough, and going to his hut brought out a canvas bag containing some specimens; he pointed to the bag and remarked, "No one need starve when he can dig that out of the ground." The gum is the resin of the Kauri tree, and on the ground where it is found vast forests of this splendid tree must have existed in past ages. This gum makes a very fine and clear varnish used by carriage builders and cabinet makers for anything that requires a high grade of finish. It is found in lumps of varying size and embedded in the earth; the digger armed with a long thin iron rod probes the ground, and when a bit of gum is struck they dig it out.

I have seen several very beautiful collections

varying from jet black to white as clear as glass, and all the different shades from palest amber to a rich claret brown, and specimens are occasionally met with that have insects embedded in the centre. One bit of gum the miner showed me was amalgamated with coal, and although in one solid firm piece, yet the coal was quite distinct and separate from the gum. Our friend insisted on giving me a pretty piece, but I would not take it unless he accepted a present from me. I said I wished to keep it, but could not do so unless he consented to my request; I should then take it home and placing it in a cabinet of curios should label it with his name. The honest old fellow looked very pleased as shaking hands he wished us "God speed" and good-bye.

I still have that piece of Kauri gum, and shall always keep it as a souvenir of that far-off land, that happy day, and my kindly old friend John Frazer, the gum digger and coal miner.

CHAPTER X.

RUSSELL—BAY OF ISLANDS

The environs of Whangarei possess many pretty and well-cultivated estates, where a great variety of fruit is to be seen. Orange growing is most successful, and has become a thriving industry, large quantities of fruit being exported. Grapes, too, of a very good quality, grown under glass, are sent down to Auckland for sale, where they fetch good prices.

The proprietor of a fine range of hot-houses told me he was doing well; he thinned out the grapes himself, as he would not trust anyone to do the work for him. It was a two months' task, but the results were, he said, well worth the trouble, and so it seemed to be from the appearance of the vines. Viticulture is greatly on the increase in this district. I tasted some wine made from the outdoor grapes that would have been most excellent had it been matured by keeping. I think the vine-growing industry, if carefully developed, will become a valuable source of revenue, as the conditions of climate and soil seem most favourable for the growth of vines. A gentleman who has lived for several years in Southern Italy, and thoroughly understands

all branches of the grape-growing and wine-making industry, was when we were leaving New Zealand completing negotiations for the purchase of a large estate in the northern part of the north island to be devoted entirely to grape-growing. He told us he considered the conditions exceptionally good, and a great deal of money was to be made in this way. But settlers and labour are needed before this fruitful land will yield to the full the teeming riches of its soil. New Zealand might with advantage adopt the system that obtains in Canada, where settlers get a certain amount of helpful supervision, and are not left to sink or swim in a strange land, as the case may be. Youngsters, too, going out to New Zealand apply from home to agents, who undertake to place them in good situations; consequently the applicant is, on arrival, dumped down into the first situation that offers, and the agent then washes his hands of his erstwhile client.

The system of cadetting seems all a mistake, and this I have been told by cadets themselves. It appears that in the case of lads whose relatives pay a fixed sum annually for board and instruction in farming, they are taken on by employers who do not consider that the cadet is to receive general agricultural instruction, but should the estate happen to be a sheep farm the cadet will be put to this branch of work and learn nothing else; the same way with dairying, his agricultural training will begin and end there, the interests of the cadet being entirely overlooked and subordinated to the requirements of his employer. I cannot think it wise to launch a

youngster into the world, so far from home, without the guiding of a friendly hand or someone to look after his interests. I have known many who have been cruelly treated and underfed, badly housed, and helpless to better their position through want of means.

On the other hand the remittance man is a terror; he receives a small allowance at stated intervals from relatives at home, which is enough to keep him in food, and if he does not like work he can live in idleness, till he degenerates into a loafer, and perhaps takes to habits of intemperance, which eventually completes his ruin. There is much to be done by wise heads and kind hearts in the case of the settler question.

Amongst the many pretty excursions at Whangarei is a charming drive to a waterfall about three miles out of the township. You leave the coach road and, scrambling down an easy descent, arrive at the base of the fall. The water flows from a river that precipitates itself in one unbroken perpendicular sheet, about 90 feet in height, and falls into a dark green pool, which it churns into snow-white foam; emerging from the pool the stream gently winds its way through the exquisite little valley under the drooping trees into the open country, forming one of the most romantic bits of scenery it is possible to imagine.

Not far from Whangarei are the hot springs of Kamo. Here a charming hotel has been built for the accommodation of visitors wishing to take the baths. A farm is attached to the hotel, and the freshest of eggs and dairy produce are available.

There is regular postal communication with the town, and an omnibus plies to and fro between Kamo and Whangarei.

I remember an amusing incident that occurred as we were driving back on one occasion to the town. The omnibus was rolling along the road like a ship in a heavy sea. I was sitting outside with one of our party, on the seat behind the driver, which held three or four persons, when there was a report like a pistol-shot, and the vehicle took a very decided list to one side, much to the alarm of the passengers. The driver growled out "Humph! a spring is broken." And so it proved to be. The nervous passengers jumped out, and said they should walk home, but I was unable to follow suit, as I had, a month previously, injured my leg by a fall from a carriage, so I had to make the best of the situation by sitting still, whilst I was unmercifully chaffed by my friends, who said it was my weight that had broken the spring of the omnibus!

But our pleasant stay of one month at Whangarei had come to a close, so our old boat, the *Clansman*, came round to the wharf, and with many shrieks and whistles carried us back to Auckland.

Subsequently we paid another delightful visit further north to Kororarika, or Russell. The Bay of Islands, as it is called, is a very lovely bit of New Zealand, and, as the name indicates, is a bay of islands, each picturesque in its own peculiar form of loveliness. For persons who delight to wander "far from the madding crowd," the remoteness of Russell from the busy haunts of men, its aloofness from

business, or anything that savours of worry or haste, is delightful. It seemed to me as I watched the few men lounging about the wharf with their hands in their pockets that their motto was "Time is made for slaves." Indeed, in this lotus-eating spot of earth, as I soon found out, time seemed of no account. The little wooden hotel was but a stone's throw from the steamer, and when, on arrival, we asked if a man could come with a hand-barrow or truck to take the luggage, the reply was, "Oh, yes, Charlie will be coming presently." So we sat down and waited patiently till it pleased Charlie to leave the hotel bar, where he had gone for his morning drink.

In this delightful corner of the world there were only two posts a week, no daily paper, and no such thing as a road, a cart, a horse, or a conveyance of any kind, and no line of rail; the only means of communication with the outer world was the telegraph and the steamer *Clansman* (which came once a week), the second post coming by runner across country, so we felt almost as much isolated from the busy world as if in the midst of the Atlantic ocean. Russell is the oldest town in New Zealand. There are two or three small general stores, and a few houses mostly built along the edge of the sea; these, and a few scattered buildings, nestle at the foot of the hill.

The fish-canning factory is at the end of the little bay. The fishing-boats used to come in and draw up to the wharf and deliver their cargoes of fish; these were carried into the factory and cleaned; the offal being thrown out into the sea, where vast numbers of gulls were waiting in rows along the

edge of the shore to pick up the leavings. It was a pretty sight to see these birds hovering over the surface of the water, and swooping down in graceful circles, uttering their soft, plaintive little cries. We inspected the factory, and were much interested in the whole process from the time the boats brought in their loads until the fish were put into the tins and soldered up. The manager told us they sent the fish (a species of grey mullet) all over the world, and had for a long time been supplying Japan for army consumption. We were given a sample tin of the fish, and had it cooked the next day; we found it delicious, and with more flavour than there generally is in tinned fish.

Russell is a place where there are so many pretty spots to visit all along the coast that one could picnic every day of the year on fresh ground. It is certainly an ideal place for the fisherman, there are so many varieties of sea fish, all affording excellent sport. A large quantity of fish is sent down to Auckland by the weekly steamer, and it was a curious sight to see the numerous and, to us, unknown varieties that covered the wharf. Everyone in Russell fishes. If you have a few minutes to spare, you run down to the wharf with your rod and a bit of bait and join the other busy idlers! I went down one day, and saw a friend catch ninety-eight fish as fast as he could pull them out, and they were all good for table. But the heaviest fishing lies off various points of the coast; arrangements can always be made for the day, and we had some very pleasant fishing expeditions that are a pleasure to recall.

One very charming day we went to a place called Deepwater Cove for wild goat shooting. We chartered a small steamer, and hoped to have got off punctually at 6 o'clock, but alas! we reckoned without a thick sea fog, that seemed to grow thicker with daylight, and when we got down to the steamer we could see nothing. After waiting an hour and a half it began to lift a little, and we ventured to get up steam and move very cautiously forward; on getting out to sea, away from the land, we found the atmosphere was much clearer. We passed through a perfect archipelago of islands until we reached Deepwater Cove, and there the sportsmen got into a small boat and rowed to shore, where they commenced to climb the hill, which was very stiff. They expected to find the goats on the other side. Presently we heard a shot, succeeded later on by others, so being quite reassured as to the success of the shooters, the ladies got into a boat and went round out of the cove towards the open sea, where we spent our time very pleasantly fishing till the shouts of the returning sportsmen summoned us back to the steamer. Several good heads had been secured, the finest falling to one of our party; it was beautifully mounted by Mr. Hazard of Queen Street, Auckland. I shall never forget the skinning of that goat's head on our return to Russell. The operation was commenced next morning in the little backyard of the hotel. The odour was overpowering, and those of us who good-naturedly assisted were quite unapproachable, although coats were aired, and afterwards well sprinkled with lavender water.

On our return to Russell, through the archipelago of islands we saw some very large fish called threshers; in appearance they were somewhat like the whale tribe. We came upon the school just as we were passing the island where old Sophia, the Tarawera guide, had lived in her younger days; and these were the fish she had told so many legends about, and called Taniwhas (monsters), and in common with all Maoris had invested with supernatural attributes.

Russell is a great place for boating picnics, in fact boating is the great means of locomotion as there are no roads, and these picnics are varied by shooting, fishing and shell-gathering, for no one in this lotus-eating place is either too old or too young to go picnicing. I remember calling on some friends one afternoon, and my hostess, looking out of the window, said: "I hope my little grandson will soon be coming back; he has gone to a picnic; they called for him at 9 o'clock this morning, and it is now nearly 5 o'clock." "Gone to a picnic," I said, "but he is only a year and a half old!" "Oh, he is not shy, and often goes out for the day and was quite delighted to start this morning; he loves boating." Before I had recovered from my astonishment voices were heard, and a gentleman entered the room, carrying our missing little friend, whose rosy cheeks and bright eyes left no doubt he had spent a happy day. "I found him in one of the boats stranded on a sand-bank, and thought, as it was getting late, I had better bring him home," was the calm remark.

The activity and independence of colonial children

is wonderful; even at the earliest age they become self-reliant, and find out how to shift for themselves. The colonial mother is undoubtedly fashioned of the same metal as the mother of the Gracchi, and the children are doubtless of the same tempered steel.

Some friends took us one day across the bay to see the place where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between the British and Maoris; starting early in the afternoon, we rode across the bay and proceeded first to the mouth of the river, where there was a saw-mill, and a chain thrown across the water to stop the logs of wood from floating out to sea, after they had been swept over the fall. It was a delightful wild bit of scenery, but we were told that at times, when there was a full amount of water, it was a very fine sight. After rowing back to the treaty-house and inspecting it, and the monument, our friends said: "We are going to take you to the cottage of some Maori acquaintances, who will give us tea."

We found our host working in a carpenter's shed; he took us to his cottage, and calling his wife, returned to his work. A nice-looking young Maori woman, in neat European dress, came out and asked us to sit down whilst she brought the tea. The little room was quite pretty with pictures, ornaments and coloured table-cloths. The tea was daintily served on a tray, accompanied with thin bread and butter and cakes; all was exquisitely clean, and we much enjoyed our kind Maori friend's hospitality. Outside the cottage was a small garden with the season's flowers, and shut in by a paling to keep out stray

animals, whilst beyond was the sea with Russell in the distance.

During my stay at Russell an amusing incident occurred which I must not forget to mention. I was sitting one morning in my bed-room, looking through some letters, when, in a fit of abstraction, I crumpled up one and threw it out of the window; with the paper and the jerk of my hand, a couple of rings flew off my finger, and to my dismay fell on the grass below. I rushed downstairs to look for them, as I feared a passer-by might pick them up. One ring was quickly found, but we were still looking for the other when we were joined by a shabby-looking man, who, if he had had a pack on his back, might have been taken for a sundowner. He asked if I had lost anything. I replied "Yes, a ring with a pearl; it has fallen out of the window." "I will help you to find it," he said good-naturedly; so we returned to the search, and in a few minutes he exclaimed, "Here it is," and to my great delight handed me the ring. I thanked him, and taking out my purse, gave him half-a-crown, saying how glad I was to get it back again. He smiled, and thanking me, put the coin into his pocket, and wishing me good-morning, walked away.

I thought nothing more of the incident, till, going into lunch, I was rather astonished to see my friend sitting opposite to me at the table. Of course, I made no allusion to the meeting in the morning, but when the meal was over I called the table-maid and asked the name of the gentleman who had sat opposite me at lunch. "That is Mr. —— of ——

Island," she replied. I felt rather surprised, but worse followed. "He and his brother are very rich, quite the richest and most successful farmers in this part of the country," added the girl, with a bright smile. This was the last straw; I asked no more—I had heard enough! I may add that subsequently our friend and his brother most kindly asked us to go and spend a day with them, and we should have done so had we been able to prolong our stay.

We left Russell in the *Clansman* for a trip to Whangaroa, an interesting place, with some fine rock scenery along the coast. The captain very kindly asked us on to the bridge, and pointed out the different places of interest. The Mushroom Rocks were most curious, and others named from their resemblance to various things. As we neared the entrance to Whangaroa the captain said, "Now, could you tell me where the entrance to the harbour lies?" I looked around and could see nothing but rocks, and not the smallest opening approaching to a harbour, when a sudden turn revealed a wide stretch of water, enclosed by very picturesque scenery, and the little township nestling at the foot of the rocks, the two largest of which were called St. Peter and St. Paul.

The following day we made a little driving-excursion, the road for some distance following an arm of the sea that ran inland. The driver entertained me with a string of stories relating to the misadventures of other drivers along the road, to show us people from the old country what they could do. The road being very narrow and running like a ridge,

with a pretty deep drop on either side, there were only occasional places where two conveyances could pass abreast, and even then the manœuvre had to be carefully executed.

Coming to one of these, the driver pointed with his whip. "D'ye see that place? Well, John —— was driving along with his team and waggon, when he met another fellow with a cart, and he cut it rather too fine; the edge of the road gave way, and the waggon fell over smash off the raised roadway to the ground below, and a nice job poor John had to get himself and his cattle out of the fix." And saying this, he looked at me through the corner of his eye, to see what impression the story had made. As I was rather tired of the tales of terror with which he had been regaling me, I said, "So John —— and his waggon fell down there! How very awkward for him. And what happened after? How did he get out again? It does look rather a deep place." I said all this smiling, and not looking in the least bit alarmed or astonished. I think he wished to make a good impression on my mind of young New Zealand, and the resourceful way in which they extricated themselves out of their difficulties.

CHAPTER XI.

WEST COAST SOUNDS

We could not leave New Zealand without paying a visit to the wonderful West Coast Sounds. We went by steamer from Auckland to Dunedin, stopping at several intermediate ports on the way. Dunedin is very picturesque, and stands high above the sea. There are good shops and hotels, and some very pretty houses set about on the side of the hills amongst the trees. The township has a very good system of electric cars which make the heights quite accessible. The gradients are most alarming; I do not think I have ever seen steeper in any part of the world. There is a tradition that one of these trams broke away from control, and precipitated itself into the harbour with its only passenger—an unfortunate Chinaman. Alas! my poor brother. When we were in the Mornington car, and were coming down the steepest part of the incline, a friend began to joke, and playfully remarked if the brake did not act we should all go to "Kingdom come." This was quite too much for my feelings, as I was nervous, so in a fit of temper I snappishly said, "Well, if it is going to happen,

LANDING-PLACE, ARTHUR RIVER, MILFORD.

To face p. 146.

there is no necessity for you to be talking of it beforehand"—a retort that raised a laugh from everyone.

Our starting-point for the West Coast Sounds was Dunedin. We left in a fine boat—the Union Company's *Waikaré*, 120 passengers—and every arrangement was made for the comfort of the travellers. The mode of procedure was this: the boat steamed along at night, and anchored in the early morning. After breakfast, two steam-launches came to the side towing a number of smaller boats, and people who had made up their parties the previous evening took their places, and off we went, towed by the launches up and down the glorious fiords (those that were within immediate reach of the steamer). There are thirteen fiords or sounds within a coastal limit of one hundred miles. The first of these is called Preservation Inlet. At the entrance beautifully-wooded islands are dotted about, through which the steamer steers its way, until it passes through a narrow passage into Long Sound. The lower mountains in these sounds are covered with beautiful foliage; ferns, lycopodium moss, creepers, and the graceful tree-fern, clothe the slopes to the very water's edge, and form an unrivalled series of pictures that are marvellous, even in a world that is so full of beauty.

It is difficult for the traveller to say which is the most beautiful of these sounds, but the consensus of opinion, I think, gives the vote in favour of Milford Sound; and here, surrounded by lofty mountains, some of them snow-capped, we anchored

within sight of two magnificent waterfalls—the Bowen and Stirling Falls. The former consists of two breaks; the first leap is about 50 feet, and the water then falls into a rocky basin, out of which it dashes with a stunning roar in one magnificent bound of 300 feet into the sound below. We noticed a very curious appearance on a fine snowfield near Mitre Peak; the snow, strange to say, which at that elevation (about 5,000 or 6,000 feet) should have been pure white, was a rusty red colour. There were many speculations about it, but one of the ship's officers suggested that it might very possibly be volcanic ash perhaps from Martinique, one of the great eruptions of Mount Pelée having only occurred a short time previously; and this hypothesis we thought a very probable one, as we know that volcanic dust is often conveyed for a very great distance through the air.

After being towed through the sounds, we returned to lunch, and between 3.30 and 4 o'clock we started again in the boats; and the blue-jackets, having put in the tea baskets, we proceeded to some suitable place; for landing is not always possible as the rocks are sometimes quite perpendicular; and having landed, the baskets were unpacked, a fire lighted, and the billy (tincan) boiled for tea. After tea some of the party sketched, and others explored or collected ferns, of which there were a great variety. Many cameras were also in use, for the snap-shotter was as active here as in other parts of the world.

One very funny snapshot was taken; some small

STIRLING FALLS, MILFORD SOUND. [*To face p.* 148.

penguins had made themselves a home under an overhanging bank; a pointer that was with us hunted one of them out, and held him gently till one of the officers released him; the flat stump of a tree being near, he put the bird standing on it, and the fat little fellow looked so quaint sitting quite bolt upright, and his two rudimentary wings looking like little hands. His captor kept stroking him down, and beyond an occasional peck of defiance, he did not seem much alarmed. A snap-shotter coming by at that moment shouted, "One moment, please," and succeeded in taking a very good photograph of the strangely assorted couple. After tea, and the exploring being over, we returned to our ship in time to dress for dinner, and the evening ended with either dancing, a concert, or some other amusement.

I may mention that the catering on board the *Waikaré* was beyond praise; I have never seen anything better, and the menu, which was varied in the most wonderful way for every meal, would have pleased the most fastidious of gourmets. The toilettes of the younger ladies were very brilliant. I remember one morning, just before the boats started for the usual excursion, a friend said to me: "Have you seen the Dream?" "No, I have not," I replied. "Well, just look down at No. 2 boat." I looked over the side, and there, indeed, was a vision, a dream of "Faerie Lande." It was seated right in the middle of the stern sheets, as I believe the nautical term is. It had a very pretty face and delicate complexion, and was clad in pale

rose pink, with a parasol of the same tender hue; and a most bewitching hat with delicate chiffon strings which were tied under a chin that owned a saucy dimple; and when I say that the feet were shod in dainty brodequins, it may convey some idea how very pretty was the "Dream." I must add that, during the whole fortnight's cruise, I never saw that dainty vision wear the same costume twice.

But rumour, who is a wicked jade, said that several enormous Saratogas came on board. Well, what matter? There was plenty of room in the ship, and the Saratogas, with the help of a very large cabin, contributed towards the production of a charming picture that gladdened our eyes from (not too) "early morn to dewy eve." A regatta and a fancy dress ball were both a great success, and so our happy fortnight of roaming about the glorious West Coast Sounds of New Zealand came to a close, and we all parted with a mutual hope that time might bring us together again some day. But ere I close I should like to convey (if it be possible) some little idea of the beauty of these land-locked reaches of water, that run for miles into the country.

As I have said there are thirteen sounds or fiords, and these are entered from the open sea. As the vessel advances the mountains rise in varying heights till at Milford Sound Tutoko attains the fine altitude of 9,042 feet; Mitre Peak, the large conical mount that drops in a sheer precipice to the waters of the Sound, is 5,560 feet. The water of all these sounds varies in colour according to the hue of the

sky, the light or the near vegetation. One strange fact strikes the visitor—that is the extraordinary absence of animal life; the absolute silence and stillness of the bush which gives the wanderer a very eerie and lonely feeling; not a sound comes to the ear save near the waters of the fiord when the occasional splash of a fish is heard as it rises at a fly. The silence of the everlasting hills broods over the scene in all its lonely beauty, and the sound of a human voice, or aught which breaks a stillness that can be felt, comes at times as a positive relief.

Another remarkable feature of the sounds is the great depth of the water close to the shore; so great is it, that ships of the heaviest tonnage could anchor in safety almost within arm's-length of the rocks. The whole of Great Britain's fleet, in fact, every vessel we possess, *and every vessel we ought to possess*, if we hope to hold our own (as we have hitherto done), and keep the supremacy of the seas —every ship, and infinitely more could ride safely at anchor in the wonderful stretches of land-locked water which form a series of natural harbours unrivalled in the world.

From Whangaroa we went to Russell, and shortly afterwards returned to Auckland.

We had now brought our stay in dear, beautiful New Zealand to a close, and "Farewell, a word that must be and hath been," echoed through the air as our generous-hearted and hospitable friends bade us "God speed," and with a warm shake of the hand cried, do not forget us, come back again

and we will give you a hearty welcome. With these kindly words ringing in our ears we watched with deep regret Aorangi (the land of the long white cloud) fade softly away in the distance, till nought but sea and sky remained, though deep in our hearts was the unfading impress of the lovely picture which time can never obliterate and memory will ever cherish. Long may New Zealand be a jewel in Great Britain's Crown! Long may her children be loyal and true to the teachings of their motherland! Long may the old flag bravely fly firmly nailed to the mainmast of honour and duty, whilst her children work in safety beneath its protecting care! Let party spirit and party politics be forgotten. Brotherhood, our motto. King and country, our watchword. Let Great Britain stretch out her strong and loving arms, gathering to her heart the children of her many lands, remembering that our "strength lies in unity."

And now, kind readers, my wanderings in New Zealand having come to a close, let me, as a last word, quote a saying of the ancient philosopher Pythagoras, "Union is God," and so this being the conclusion of the matter, I bid you one and all farewell.

THE END.

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